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*The*  
STORY OF THE  
GREAT WAR

BATTLE OF JUTLAND BANK  
GREAT RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE  
KUT-EL-AMARA • CAMPAIGN  
IN GERMAN EAST AFRICA



V O L U M E I X

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## PART I—OPERATIONS ON THE SEA

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### CHAPTER I

#### NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS IN MANY WATERS

THE months which brought the second year of war to a close were marked by increased activity on the part of all the navies engaged. Several single-ship actions took place, and the Germans pursued their submarine tactics with steady, if not brilliant, results.

It was during this period that they sent the first submersible merchant ship across the Atlantic and gave further proof of having developed undersea craft to an amazing state of efficiency. On their part the British found new and improved methods of stalking submarines until it was a hazardous business for such craft to approach the British coast. A considerable number were captured; just how many was not revealed.

After a slackening in the submarine campaign against merchant ships, due partly to a division of opinion at home and largely to the growing protests of neutrals, Germany declared that after March 1, 1916, every ship belonging to an enemy that carried a gun would be considered an auxiliary, and torpedoed without warning. (For an account of the negotiations with the United States in relation to this edict, see United States and the Belligerents, Vol. X, Part IV.)

A spirited fight took place in the North Sea on March 24, 1916, when the *Greif*, a German auxiliary of 10,000 tons, met the *Alcantara*, 15,300 tons, a converted British merchantman. The *Greif* was attempting to slip through the blockade under

Norwegian colors when hailed. She parleyed with the British vessel until the latter came within a few hundred yards of her. Then, seeing a boat put out, the German unmasked her guns and opened fire. Broadside after broadside. In twelve minutes the *Greif* was on fire and the *Alcantara* sinking from the explosion of a torpedo. The *Greif* might have got away had not two other British vessels come on the scene, the converted cruiser *Andes* ending her days with a few long-range shots. One hundred and fifteen men and officers out of 300 on the *Greif* were saved, and the British lost five officers and sixty-nine men. Both vessels went to the bottom after as gallant an action as the war had produced. The *Greif* was equipped for a raiding cruise and also was believed to have had on board a big cargo of mines. When the fire started by exploding shells reaching her hold she blew up with a terrific detonation and literally was split in twain. Officers of the *Alcantara* spoke warmly of their enemy's good showing. One of them said that they approached to within two hundred yards of the *Greif* before being torpedoed and boarding parties actually had been ordered to get ready. They were preparing to lash the rigging of the two vessels together in the time-honored way and settle accounts with sheath knives when the torpedo struck and the *Alcantara* drifted away helpless.

On the stroke of midnight, February 29, 1916, the German edict went into effect placing armed merchantmen in a classification with auxiliary cruisers. The opening of March also was marked by the deliverance of a German ultimatum in Lisbon, demanding that ships seized by the Portuguese be surrendered within forty-eight hours. Thirty-eight German and Austrian steamers had been requisitioned, striking another blow at Teutonic sea power. Most of these belonged to Germany. Coincident with Portugal's action Italy commandeered thirty-four German ships lying in Italian ports, and several others in her territorial waters. All Austrian craft had been seized months before, but the fiction of peace with Germany still was punctiliously observed by both nations. Despite this action Germany did not declare war upon her quondam ally.

Italy brought another issue sharply to the fore in the early days of March. A few of her passenger vessels running to America and other countries had been armed previous to that time. It was done quietly, and commanders found many reasons for the presence of guns on their vessels. Of a sudden all Italian passenger craft sailed with 3-inch pieces fore and aft.

Berlin announced that on the first day of March, 1916, German submarines had sunk two French auxiliaries off Havre, and a British patrol vessel near the mouth of the Thames. Paris promptly denied the statement, and London was noncommittal. No other particulars were made public. Russian troops landed on the Black Sea coast on March 6, 1916, under the guns of a Russian naval division and took Atina, seventy-five miles east of Trebizond, the objective of the Grand Duke Constantine's army. Thirty Turkish vessels, mostly sailing ships loaded with war supplies, were sunk along the shore within a few days.

Winston Spencer Churchill, former First Lord of the Admiralty, on March 7, 1916, delivered a warning in the House of Commons against what he believed to be inadequate naval preparations. He challenged statements made by Arthur J. Balfour, his successor, on the navy's readiness. Mr. Balfour had just presented naval estimates to the House, and among other things set forth that Britain had increased her navy by 1,000,000 tons and more than doubled its personnel since hostilities began. This encouraging assurance impressed the world, but Colonel Churchill demanded that Sir John Fisher, who had resigned as First Sea Lord, be recalled to his post.

An announcement from Tokyo, March 8, 1916, served to show the new friendship between Russia and Japan. Three warships captured by the Japanese in the conflict with Russia were purchased by the czar and added to Russian naval forces. They were the *Soya*, the *Tango* and the *Sagami*, formerly the *Variag*, *Poltava* and *Peresviet*, all small but useful ships. Following the capture of Atina, the Russians took Rizeh on March 9, 1916, a city thirty-five miles east of Trebizond, an advance of forty miles in three days toward that important port. The fleet co-



operated, and it was announced that the defenses of Trebizond itself were under fire and fast crumbling away.

On March 16, 1916, the Holland-Lloyd passenger steamer *Tubantia*, a vessel of 15,000 tons, was sunk near the Dutch coast by a mine or torpedo. She was commonly believed to have been the victim of a submarine. Her eighty-odd passengers and 300 men reached shore. Several Americans were aboard. Statements by some of the crew that four persons lost their lives could not be verified, but several of the *Tubantia's* officers made affidavit that the vessel was torpedoed.

The incident aroused public feeling in Holland to fever pitch, and there were threats of war. Germany hastened to deny that a submarine attacked the ship, and made overtures to the Dutch Government, offering reparation if it could be established that a German torpedo sank the steamer. This was never proved, and nothing came of the matter. But it cost Germany many friends in Holland and intensified the fear and hatred entertained toward their neighbor by the majority of Hollanders. It served to keep Dutch troops, already mobilized, under arms, and gave Berlin a bad quarter hour.

Fast on the heels of this incident came the sinking of another Dutch steamer, the *Palembang*, which was torpedoed and went down March 18, 1916, near Galloper Lights in a Thames estuary. Three torpedoes struck the vessel and nine of her crew were injured. This second attack in three days upon Dutch vessels wrought indignation in Holland to the breaking point. The Hague sent a strong protest to Berlin, which again replied in a conciliatory tone, hinting that an English submarine had fired on the *Palembang* in the hope of embroiling Holland with Germany. This suggestion was instantly rejected by the Dutch press and people. Negotiations failed to produce any definite result, save to prolong the matter until tension had been somewhat relieved. The French destroyer *Renaudin* fell prey to a submarine in the Adriatic on the same day. Three officers, including the commander, and forty-four of her crew, were drowned. Vienna also announced the loss in the Adriatic of the hospital ship *Elektra* on March 18, 1916. She was said to have

been torpedoed, although properly marked. One sailor was killed and two nuns serving as nurses received wounds.

German submarine activity in the vicinity of the Thames was emphasized March 22, 1916, when the *Galloper* Lightship, well known to all seafaring men, went to the bottom after being torpedoed. The vessel was stationed off dangerous shoals near the mouth of the river. The Germans suffered the loss of a 7,000-ton steamship on this day, when the *Esparanza* was sunk by a Russian warship in the Black Sea. She had taken refuge in the Bulgarian port of Varna at the outbreak of the conflict and attempted to reach Constantinople with a cargo of food-stuffs, but a Russian patrol vessel ended her career.

Another tragedy of the sea came at a moment when strained relations between Germany and the United States made almost anything probable. The *Sussex*, a Channel steamer plying between Folkestone and Dieppe, was hit by a torpedo March 24, 1916, when about three hours' sail from the former port, and some fifty persons lost their lives. A moment after the missile struck there was an explosion in the engine room that spread panic among her 386 passengers, many of whom were Belgian women and children refugees bound for England. One or two boats overturned, and a number of frightened women jumped into the water without obtaining life preservers. Others strapped on the cork jackets and were rescued hours later. Some of the victims were killed outright by the impact of the torpedo and the second explosion. Fortunately the vessel remained afloat and her wireless brought rescue craft from both sides of the Channel.

The rescuers picked up practically all of those in the water who had donned life belts and took aboard those in the boats. Many of the passengers, including several Americans, saw the torpedo's wake. It was stated that the undersea craft approached the *Sussex* under the lee of a captured Belgian vessel, and when within easy target distance fired the torpedo. According to this version, the Belgian ship then was compelled to put about and leave the stricken steamer's passengers and crew to what seemed certain destruction. The presence of

this third craft never was definitely established, although vouched for by a number of those on the *Sussex*.

Of thirty American passengers five or six sustained painful injuries. The victims included several prominent persons, one of whom was Enrique Granados, the Spanish composer, and his wife. They had just returned from the United States where they had witnessed the presentation of his opera "Goyescas."

The *Sussex*, which flew the French flag, although owned by a British company, had no guns aboard and was in no wise an auxiliary craft. She reached Boulogne in tow, and the American consul there reported that undoubtedly she had been torpedoed. (For an account of the negotiations between the United States and Germany in relation to this affair see United States and the Belligerents, Vol. X, Part IV.) Ambassador Gerard, in Berlin, was instructed to ask the German Government for any particulars of the incident in its possession, so as to aid the United States in reaching a conclusion. Berlin, after much evasion, admitted that a submarine had sunk a vessel near the spot where the *Sussex* was lost, but gave it an entirely different description.

The British converted liner *Minneapolis*, used as a transport, was torpedoed in the Mediterranean with a loss of eleven lives, although this vessel also stayed afloat, according to a statement issued in London, March 26, 1916. She was a ship of 15,543 tons and formerly ran in the New York-Liverpool service. In a brush between German and British forces near the German coast, March 25, 1916, a British light cruiser, the *Cleopatra*, rammed and sunk a German destroyer. The British destroyer *Medusa* also was sunk, but her crew escaped to other vessels. In addition the Germans lost two of their armed fishing craft.

Fourteen nuns and 101 other persons were killed or drowned March 30, 1916, when the Russian hospital ship *Portugal* was sunk in the Black Sea between Batum and Rizeh on the Anatolian coast by a torpedo. The *Portugal* had stopped and was preparing to take aboard wounded men on shore. Several of those on the vessel saw the periscope of a submarine appear



above the waves, but had no fear of an attack, as the *Portugal* was plainly marked with the Red Cross insignia and was flying a Red Cross flag from her peak.

The submarine circled about the ships twice and then, to the horror of those who were watching, fired a torpedo. The missile went astray, but another followed and found its mark. Although the ship was at anchor, with the shore near by, it was impossible to get all of her crew and wounded to safety.

This attack greatly incensed Russia. She sent protests to all of the neutral powers, calling attention to the deed perpetrated against her. The flame of national anger was fanned higher when Constantinople issued a statement saying that a Turkish submarine had sunk the *Portugal*, claiming that she flew the Russian merchant flag without any of the usual Red Cross markings upon her hull. It was said that the explosion which shattered the vessel was caused by the presence of ammunition.

On the morning of March 30, 1916, the steamship *Matoppo*, a British freighter, put into Lewes, Delaware, with her master and his crew of fifty men held prisoners by a single individual. Ernest Schiller, as he called himself, had gone aboard the *Matoppo* in New York, March 29, 1916, and hid himself away until the vessel passed Sandy Hook, bound for Vladivostok. Then he came out and with the aid of two weapons which the captain described as horse pistols, proceeded to cow the master and crew. Schiller announced that the *Matoppo* was a German prize of war and that he would shoot the first man who moved a hostile hand. The crew believed him. They also had an uneasy fear that certain bombs which Schiller mentioned would be set off unless they obeyed.

With Schiller in command the *Matoppo* headed down the coast, her captor keeping vigil. Off Delaware he ordered the captain to make port. The latter obeyed, but also signaled to shore that a pirate was aboard. Port authorities then sent a boat alongside, and Schiller was arrested. He admitted under examination that he and three other men had plotted to blow up the Cunard liner *Pannonia*. They bought the dynamite and made the bombs, but his companions' courage failed, and the plan was

abandoned. Then it was proposed to stow away on some outward bound ship, seize her at sea and make for Germany. With this purpose in mind Schiller got aboard the *Matoppo*, but the other conspirators deserted him. Not to be foiled, he captured the vessel single-handed. It developed that his name was Clarence Reginald Hodson, his father having been an Englishman, but he was born of a German mother, had been raised in Germany, and was fully in sympathy with the German cause. After a trial he was sent to prison for life, the only man serving such a sentence in the United States on a charge of piracy.

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## CHAPTER II

### MINOR ENGAGEMENTS AND LOSSES

THE beginning of April found growing discontent among neutrals against the British blockade of Germany and the virtual embargo on many other nations. Sweden especially demonstrated resentment. The United States made new representations about the seizure and search of first-class mail. All of this did not deter the Allies from pursuing their policy of attrition toward Germany.

The opening day of the month saw the arrival in New York harbor of the first armed French steamer to reach that port. The *Vulcain*, a freighter, tied up at her dock with a 47-millimeter quick-firing gun mounted at the stern. Inquiries followed, with the usual result, and the advancing days found other French vessels arriving, some of the passenger liners carrying three and four 75-millimeter pieces, the famous 75's.

On April 5, 1916, Paris announced that French and British warships had sunk a submarine at an unnamed point and captured the crew. In this connection it should be said that many reports were current of frequent captures made by the Allies of enemy submersibles. The British seldom admitted such captures, seeking to befog Berlin as to the fate of her submarines.

But there was little doubt that numbers of them had been taken by both French and British.

An Austrian transport was torpedoed by a French submarine and lost in the Adriatic, April 8, 1916. Neither the loss of life nor the name of the vessel was made public by Vienna.

Two days later a Russian destroyer, the *Strogi*, rammed and sunk an enemy submersible near the spot where the hospital ship *Portugal* was torpedoed.

Reports from Paris, April 18, 1916, stated that the French had captured the submarine that torpedoed the *Sussex*. It was said that her crew and commander were prisoners, and that documentary evidence had been obtained on the vessel to prove that she sank the *Sussex*. The report could not be verified, but Paris semiofficially intimated that she had indisputable proof that the *Sussex* was a submarine's victim. The two incidents coincided so well that the capture of the vessel was believed to have been made.

Trebizond fell April 18, 1916, the Russian fleet cooperating in a grand assault. This gave Russia possession of a fine port on the Turkish side of the Black Sea and marked important progress for her armies in Asia.

Zeebrugge, Belgium, was shelled by the British fleet, April 25, 1916, the city sustaining one of the longest and heaviest bombardments which it had suffered since its capture by the Germans. As a convenient base for submarines it was a particularly troublesome thorn to the Allies, and the bombardment was directed mainly at buildings suspected of being submarine workshops, and the harbor defenses. Several vessels were sunk and much damage wrought, the German batteries at Heyst, Blankenberghe, and Knocke coming in for the heavy fire.

Naval vessels on guard engaged the Germans and succeeded in driving them off, although outnumbered. Two British cruisers were hit, without serious injury. The attack was part of a concerted plan which contemplated a smashing blow at the British line, while the Irish trouble engaged attention.

One British auxiliary was lost and her crew captured and a destroyer damaged in a scouting engagement off the Flanders



coast on April 25, 1916. The identity of the vessel was never learned. The *E-22*, a British submarine, went down April 25, 1916, in another fight. The Germans scored again when they sank an unidentified guard vessel off the Dogger Bank after dusk April 26, 1916.

Reports from Holland, April 28, 1916, told of the sinking by an armed British trawler of a submarine near the north coast of Scotland. The enemy vessel had halted two Dutch steamers when the trawler appeared. The submersible was said to be of the newest and largest type and sixty men were believed to have been lost with her. The British announced the sinking of a submarine on the same day off the east coast, one officer and seventeen men being taken prisoners. It was believed that the two reports concerned the same craft.

London also admitted the loss on April 28, 1916, of the battleship *Russell*, which struck a mine or was torpedoed in the Mediterranean. Admiral Freemantle, whose flag she bore, was among the 600 men saved. The loss of life included one hundred and twenty-four officers and men.

The *Russell* was a vessel of 14,000 tons, carried four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch pieces, and a strong secondary battery. She belonged to the predreadnought period, but was a formidable fighting ship.

The quality of Russia's determination to win victory, despite serious reverses in the field, was well indicated by an announcement made in Petrograd, May 1, 1916. A railroad from the capital to Soroka, on the White Sea, begun since the war started, had just reached completion. It covered a distance of 386 miles and made accessible a port that hitherto had been practically useless, where it was proposed to divert commercial shipments. This left free for war purposes the port of Archangel, sole window of Russia looking upon the west until Soroka was linked with Petrograd. German activity had halted all shipping to Russian Baltic ports. At the moment announcement was made of this event more than 100 ships were waiting for the ice to break up, permitting passage to Archangel and Soroka, which are held in the grip of the north for many months of each year.

A majority of these vessels carried guns, ammunition, harness, auto trucks and other things sorely needed by the Czar's armies. Additional supplies were pouring in through Vladivostok for the long haul across Siberia.

May 1, 1916, witnessed the destruction of a British mine sweeper, the *Nasturtium*, in the Mediterranean along with the armed yacht *Aegusa*, both said to have been sunk by floating mines.

The *Aegusa* formerly was the *Erin*, the private yacht of Sir Thomas Lipton, and valued at \$375,000 when the Government took it over. The craft was well known to Americans, as Sir Thomas, several times challenger for the international cup held in America, had made more than one trip to our shores on the vessel.

The French submarine *Bernouille* was responsible for the sinking of an enemy torpedo boat in the Adriatic, May 4, 1916.

Washington received a note from Germany, May 6, 1916, offering to modify her submarine orders if the United States would protest to Great Britain against the stringent blockade laid upon Germany. This offer met with prompt rejection, President Wilson standing firm and insisting upon disavowal for the sinking of the *Sussex* and search of merchantmen before attack. (See United States and the Belligerents, Vol. X, Part IV.)

Laden with munitions, the White Star liner *Cymric* was torpedoed and sunk May 9, 1916, near the British coast with a loss of five killed. The vessel remained afloat for several hours, and the remainder of her 110 officers and men were saved. She had no passengers aboard.

An Austrian transport, name unknown, went down in the Adriatic, May 10, 1916, after a French submarine torpedoed her. She was believed to have had a heavy cargo of munitions, but few soldiers, and probably was bound for Durazzo, Albania, from Pola, the naval base.

The *M-30*, a small British monitor, was struck by shells from a Turkish battery upon the island of Kesten in the Mediterranean and sunk on the night of May 13, 1916. Casualties consisted of two killed and two wounded.

The sunny weather of May brought a resumption of attacks by British and Russian submarines in the Baltic. May 18, 1916, London announced that four German steamers, the *Kolga*, *Biancha*, *Hera* and *Trav*, had been halted and destroyed in that sea within a few days. Other similar reports followed and German shipping was almost driven from the Baltic, thereby cutting off an important source of supply with Sweden and Norway, the only neutrals still trading with Germany to any considerable extent. For her part, Germany alleged that several merchant ships torpedoed by the British were sunk without warning and some of the crews killed. London denied the charge and there was none to prove or disprove it.

An Italian destroyer performed a daring feat on the night of May 30, 1916, running into the harbor at Trieste and sinking a large transport believed to have many soldiers aboard. Scarcely a soul was saved, current report stated. The raider crept out to sea again and made good her escape.

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### CHAPTER III

#### THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND BANK— BEGINNING

A GREAT naval battle was fought in the North Sea off Jutland, where, in the afternoon and evening hours of May 31, 1916, the fleets of England and Germany clashed in what might have been—but was not—the most important naval fight in history. Why it missed this ultimate distinction is not altogether clear. Nor is it altogether clear to which side victory leaned. To pronounce a satisfactory judgment on this point we need far more information than we have at present, not only as to the respective losses of the contending fleets, but as to the objects for which the battle was fought and the degree of success attained in the accomplishment of these objects. The official German report states that the German fleet left port “on a mission to the northward.” No certain evidence is at hand as to the nature of

this mission; but whatever it was, it can hardly have been accomplished, as the most northerly point reached was less than 180 miles from the point of departure, and the whole fleet, or what was left of it, was back in port within thirty-six hours of the time of leaving.

It has been surmised, and there is some reason to believe, that the German plan was to force a passage for their battle cruisers through the channel between Scotland and Norway into the open sea, where, with their high-speed and long-range guns, they might, at least for a time, have paralyzed transatlantic commerce with very serious results for England's industries, and still more serious results for her supplies of food.

Another and a somewhat more plausible theory is that the plan contemplated the escape to the open sea, not of the battle cruisers themselves, but of a number of very fast armed merchant cruisers of the *Moewe* type, which were to repeat the *Moewe's* exploit on a large scale, serving the same purpose that the submarines served during the period of their greatest activity. Color is lent to this theory by what is known of the controversy now going on in Germany between those who advocate a renewal of the submarine warfare against commerce, and those who are opposed to this. It is evident that if fast cruisers could be maintained on England's trade routes they might do all that the submarine could do and more, and this without raising any question as to their rights under international law.

Whatever the plan was, we must assume that it was thwarted by the interposition of the British fleet; and from this point of view the battle takes on the aspect of a British victory. The German fleet is back behind the fortifications and the mine fields of the Helgoland Bight, in the waters which have been its refuge for nearly two years of comparative inactivity. And the British fleet still holds the command of the sea with a force which makes its command complete, and, in all human probability, permanent.

From the narrower point of view of results on the actual field of battle, it appears from the evidence at present available that, although the Germans were first to withdraw, they had the



advantage in that they lost fewer ships than their opponents and less important ones. This is not admitted by the British, and it may not be true, but we have the positive assurance of the German Government that it is so, and no real evidence to the contrary. It must therefore be accepted for the present, always with remembrance of the fact that the first reports given out by the German authorities are admitted to have been understated "for military reasons." Only time can tell us whether the world has the whole truth even now. But taking the situation as it appears from the official statements on both sides the losses are as follows:

## BRITISH:

*Battleships*

None

*Battle Cruisers*

Three

*Armored Cruisers*

Three

*Light Cruisers*

None

*Destroyers*

Eight

## GERMAN:

*Battleships*

One

*Battle Cruisers*

One

*Armored Cruisers*

None

*Light Cruisers*

Four

*Destroyers*

Five

It is certain that the British losses as here given are substantially correct. It is possible, as has been said, that the German losses are much understated. British officers and seamen claim to have actually seen several large German ships blow up, and they are probably quite honest in these claims. They may be right. But it is only necessary to picture to one's self the conditions by which all observers were surrounded while the appalling inferno of the battle was at its height to understand how hopelessly unreliable must be the testimony of participants as to what they saw and heard. Four or five 15-inch shells striking simultaneously against the armor of a battleship and exploding with a great burst of flame and smoke might well suggest to an eager and excited observer the total destruction of the ship. And an error here would be all the easier when to the

confusion of battle was added the obscurity of darkness and of fog.

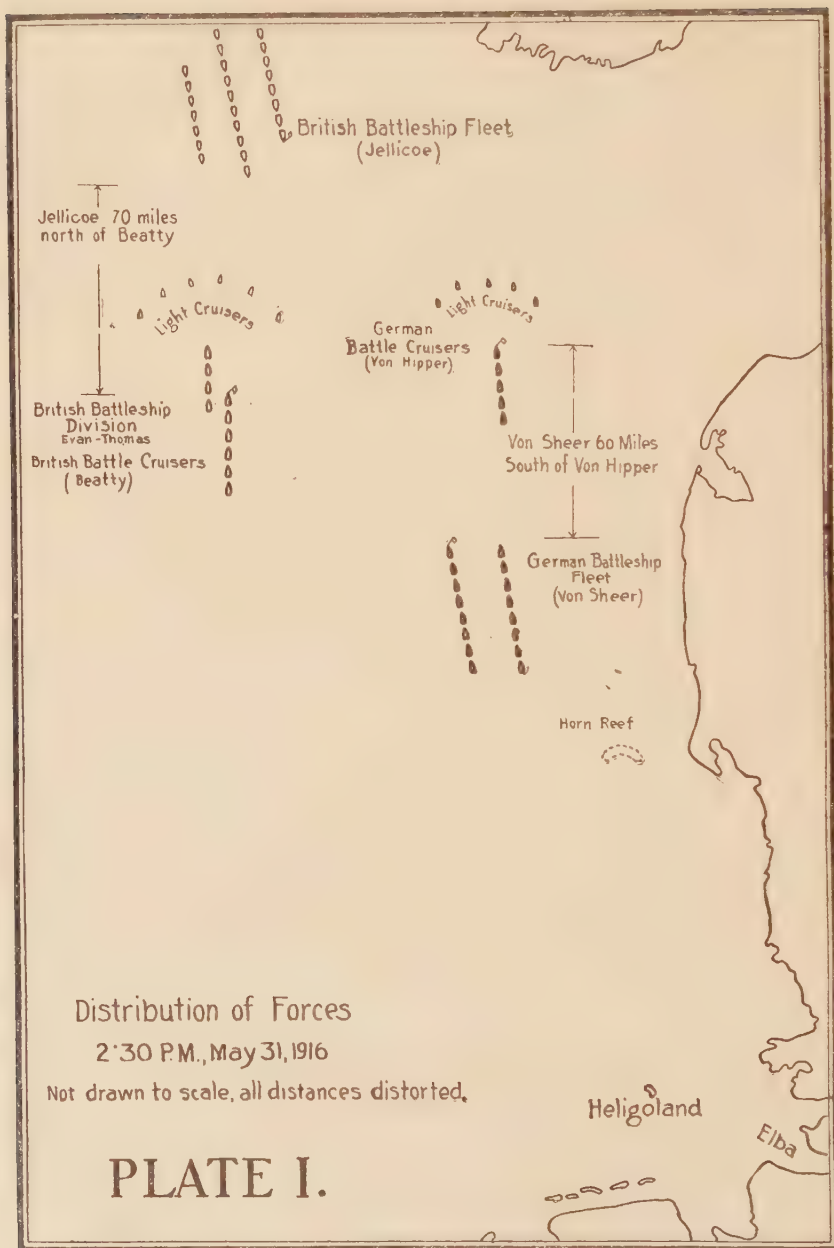
No doubt the time will come when we shall know, if not the full truth, at least enough to justify a conclusion as to the comparative losses. Until that time comes, we may accept the view that, measured by the narrow standard of ships and lives lost, the Germans had the advantage. This may be true, and yet it may be also true that the real victory was with the British, since they may have bought with their losses, great as these were, that for which they could well afford to pay an even higher price.

According to the statement of Admiral Jellicoe, the British fleet has for some months past made a practice of sweeping the North Sea from time to time with practically its whole force of fighting ships, with a view to discouraging raids by the German fleet, and in the hope of meeting any force which might, whether for raiding or for any other purpose, have ventured out beyond the fortifications and mine fields of the Helgoland Bight.

On May 31, 1916, the fleet was engaged in one of these excursions, apparently with no knowledge that the German fleet was to be abroad at the same time.

In accordance with what appears to have been the general practice, the Grand Fleet was divided; the main fighting force under the command of Admiral Jellicoe himself occupying a position near the middle of the North Sea, while the two battle-cruiser divisions under Vice Admiral Beatty, supported by a division of dreadnoughts of the *Queen Elizabeth* class under Rear Admiral Evan-Thomas, were some seventy miles to the southward (Plate I). Admiral Jellicoe had a division of battle cruisers and another of armored cruisers in addition to his dreadnoughts, and both he and Admiral Beatty were well provided with destroyers and light cruisers.

The day was pleasant, but marked by the characteristic mistiness of North Sea weather; and as the afternoon wore on the mist took on more and more the character of light drifting fog, making it impossible at times to see clearly more than two or three miles.



At two o'clock in the afternoon Admiral Beatty's detachment was steaming on a northerly course, being then about ninety miles west of the coast of Denmark, accompanied by several flotillas of destroyers and with a screen of light cruisers thrown out to the north and east.

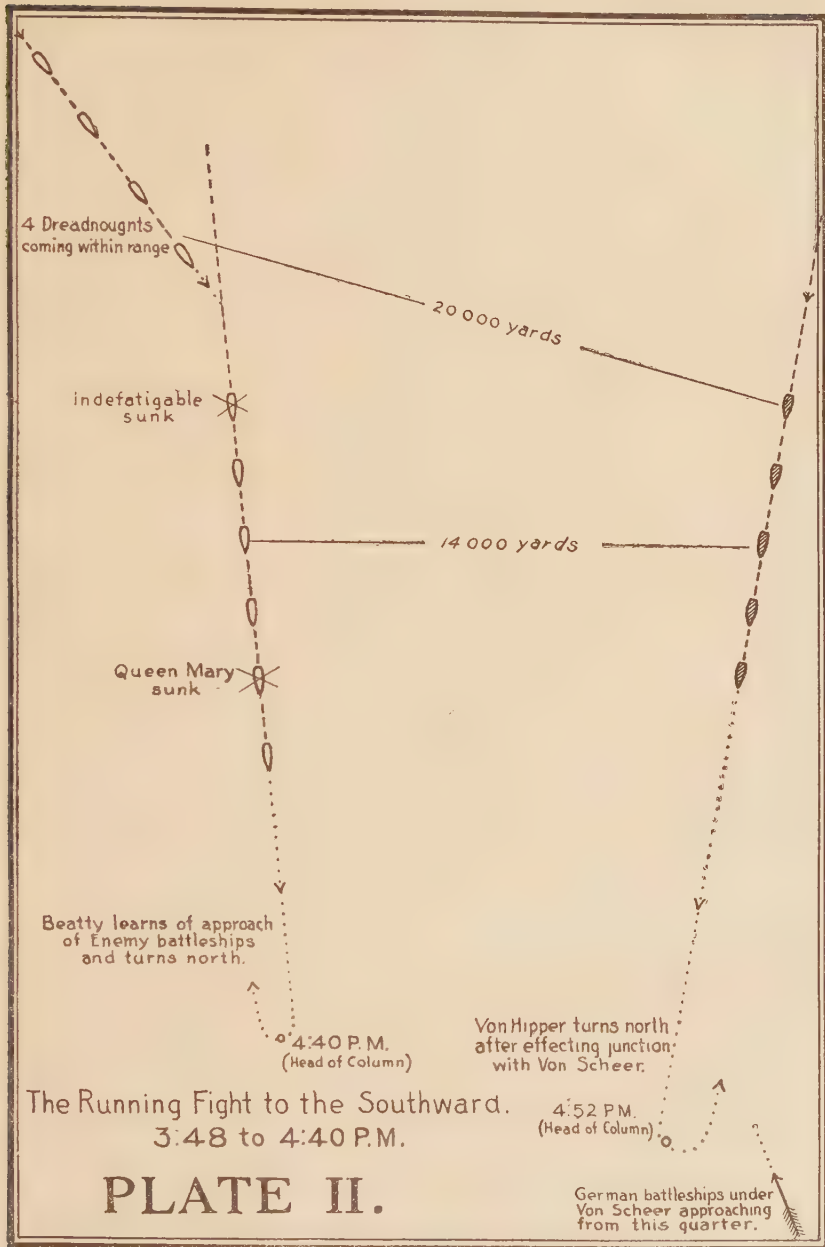
At about 2.20 p. m. the *Galatea*, one of the light cruisers engaged in scouting east of Beatty's battle cruisers, reported smoke on the horizon to the eastward, and started to investigate, the battle cruisers taking up full speed and following. The *Galatea* and her consorts were soon afterward engaged with a German force of similar type, and at 3.30 p. m. a squadron of five battle cruisers was made out some twelve miles farther to the eastward.

Beatty immediately swung off to the southeast in the hope of getting between the German squadron and its base; but the German commander, Vice Admiral von Hipper, changed course correspondingly, and the two squadrons continued on courses nearly parallel but somewhat converging until, at about 3.45 p. m., fire was opened on both sides, the range at that time being approximately nine miles. About ten minutes after the battle was fully joined, the *Indefatigable*, the rear ship of the British column, was struck by a broadside from one or more of the enemy ships, and blew up; and twenty minutes later the *Queen Mary*, latest and most powerful of the British battle cruisers, met the same fate. The suddenness and completeness of the disaster to these two splendid ships has not yet been explained and perhaps never will be. Their elimination threw the advantage of numbers actually engaged from the British to the German side, but very shortly afterward the leading ships of Rear Admiral Thomas's dreadnought division came within range and opened fire (Plate II), thus throwing the superiority again to the British side. For the next half hour or thereabouts, Von Hipper's five battle cruisers were pitted against four battle cruisers and four dreadnoughts, and Beatty reports that their fire fell off materially, as would naturally be the case. They appear, however, to have stood up gallantly under the heavy punishment to which they must have been subjected.



Beatty was drawing slowly ahead, though with little prospect of being able to throw his force across the enemy's van, as he had hoped to do, his plan being not only to cut the Germans off from their base, but to "cap" their column and concentrate the fire of his whole force on Von Hipper's leading ships. Had he been able to do this he would have secured the tactical advantage which is the object of all maneuvering in a naval engagement, and would at the same time have compelled Von Hipper to run to the northward toward the point from which Jellicoe was known to be approaching at the highest speed of his dreadnoughts. With this thought in mind, Beatty was holding on to the southward, taking full advantage of his superiority in both speed and gunfire, when a column of German dreadnoughts was sighted in the southeast approaching at full speed to form a junction with Von Hipper's squadron (Plate II). Seeing himself thus outmatched, Beatty made a quick change of plan. There was no longer any hope of carrying out the plan of throwing himself across the head of the German column, but if Von Hipper could not be driven into Jellicoe's arms it was conceivable that he might be led there, and with him the additional force that Von Scheer was bringing up to join him. So Beatty turned to the northward, and, as he had hoped, Von Hipper followed; not, however, until he had run far enough on the old course to effect a junction with Von Scheer, whose battleships fell in astern of the battle cruisers as these last swung around to the northward and took up a course parallel to that of Beatty and Thomas. Thus the running fight was resumed, with the difference that both forces were now heading at full speed toward the point from which Beatty knew Jellicoe to be approaching. Von Hipper's delay in turning had permitted Beatty to draw ahead, and the relative positions of the engaged squadrons were now those shown in Plate III.

It is during this part of the fight that the British accounts speak of Beatty as engaging the whole German fleet and as being thus tremendously overmatched. A moment's study of Plate III will make it clear that this claim is not tenable. Without fuller information than we have of positions and distances,

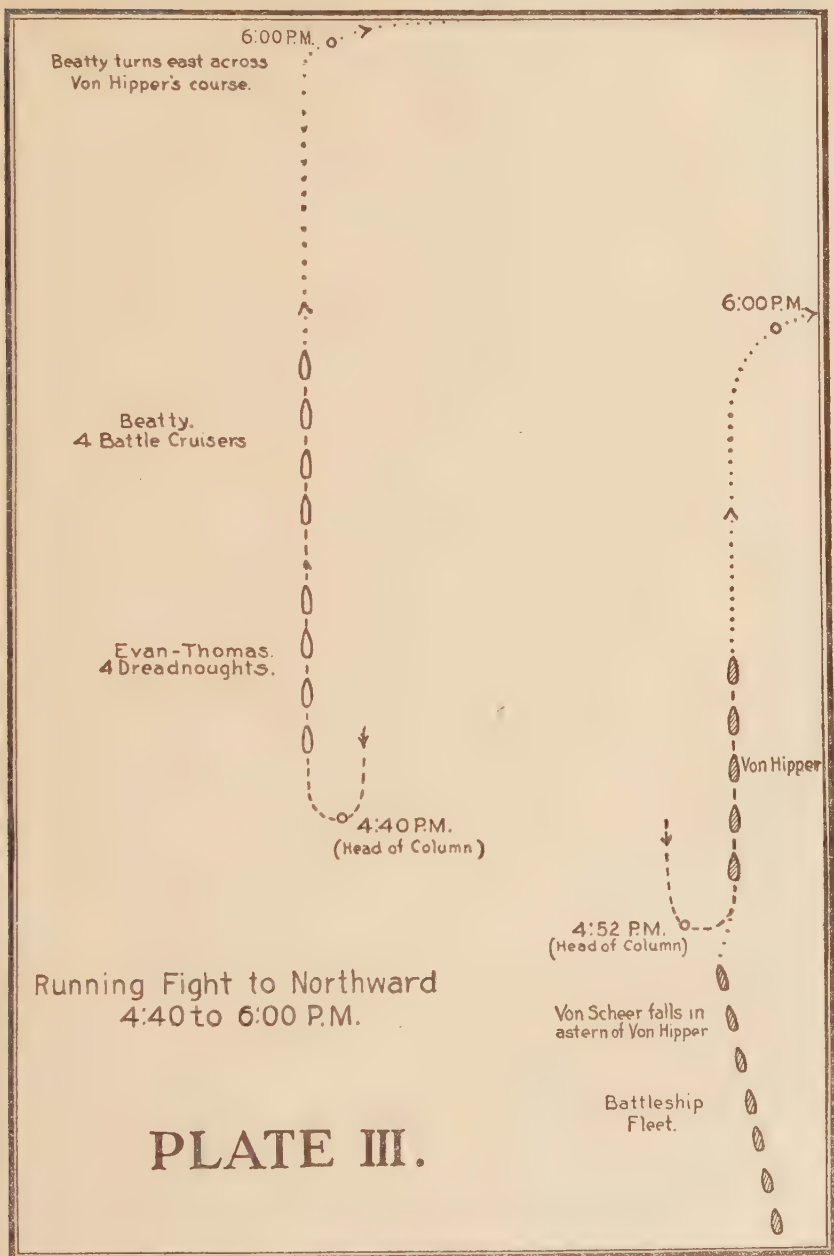


it is impossible to say exactly how many of Von Scheer's ships were able to fire on Beatty's column, but certainly the total German force within effective range could not have been materially larger than the British force it was engaging.

As far as can be figured out from Beatty's own report, the only time when he was actually pitted against a force superior to his own, within fighting range, was after he had lost the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary*, and before the dreadnoughts of Admiral Thomas's force had reached a point from which they were able to open an effective fire. He entered the fight with six battle cruisers opposed to five. He then, for a short time, had four opposed to five. A little later he had four battle cruisers and four dreadnoughts opposed to five battle cruisers, and a little later still, as has just been stated, the forces actually opposed within firing range became practically equal.

About six o'clock, having gained enough to admit of an attempt to "cap," Beatty turned his head to the eastward, but Von Hipper refused to accept this disadvantage and turned east himself, thus continuing the parallel fight on a large curve tending more and more to the east (Plate IV). It was about this time that the *Lützow*, Von Hipper's flagship and the leader of the German column, dropped out of the formation, having been so badly damaged that she could no longer maintain her position in the formation. Von Hipper, calling a destroyer alongside, boarded her and proceeded, through a storm of shell, to the *Moltke*, on which he resumed his place at the head of the fleet.

Jellicoe, seventy miles to the northward with the main fighting force, received word about three o'clock that the scouting force was in contact with the enemy, and started at once to effect a junction with Beatty. He may well have wished at that moment that his forces were separated somewhat less widely. Under his immediate command he had three squadrons of the latest and most powerful fighting ships in the world, twenty-five in all, including his own flagship, the *Iron Duke*. His squadrons were led by three of the youngest and most efficient vice admirals in the service, Sir Cecil Burney, Sir Thomas Jerram, and Sir Doveton Sturdee (Plate V). With him also were Rear Admirals



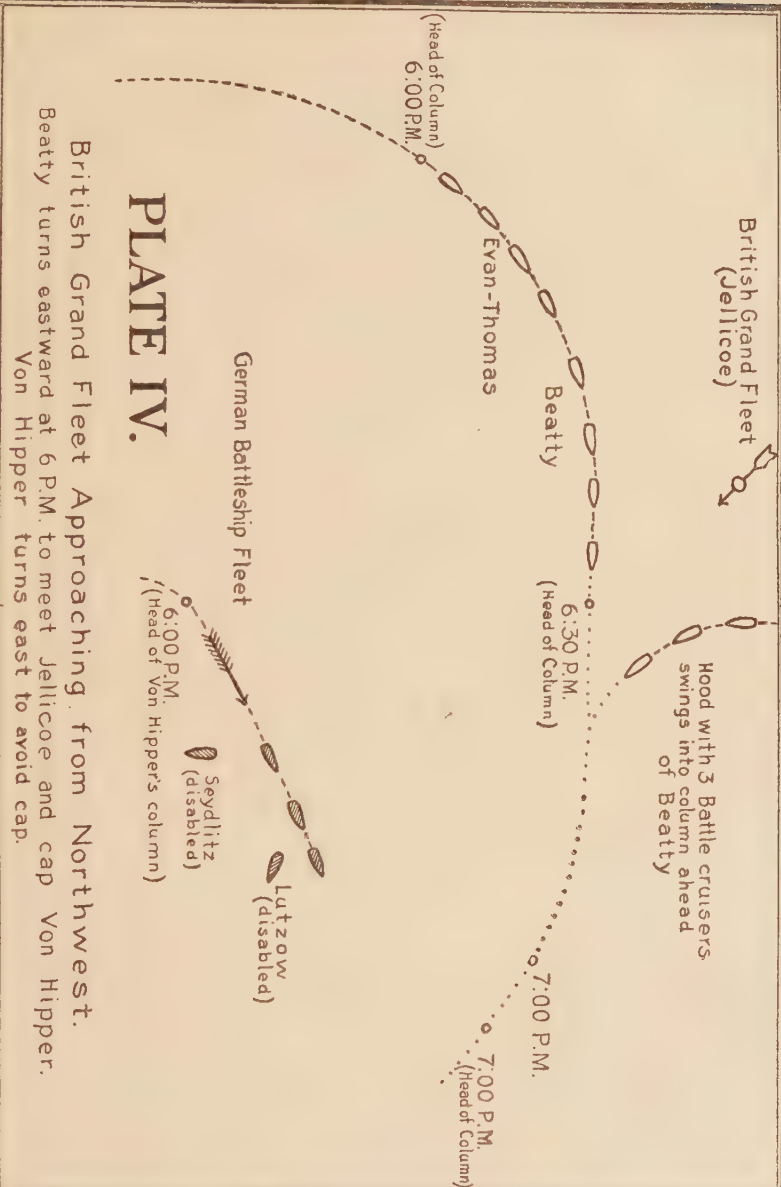


Hood and Arbuthnot, the former commanding three of the earlier battle cruisers, *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, and *Indomitable*, the latter commanding four armored cruisers, of which we shall hear more hereafter.

A majority of the battleships were capable of a speed of 21 to 22 knots, but it is improbable that the force, as a whole, could do better than 20 knots. Hood, with his "Invincibles," was capable of from 27 to 28 knots, and Jellicoe appears to have sent him on ahead to reenforce Beatty at the earliest possible moment, while following himself at a speed which, he says, strained the older ships of his force to the utmost. The formation of the fleet was probably somewhat like that shown at A, Plate V, which doubtless passed into B before fighting range was reached.

Of the southward sweep of this great armada, the most tremendous fighting force the world has ever seen on sea or land, we have no record. They started. They arrived. Of the hours that intervened no word has been said. Yet it is not difficult to picture something of the dramatic tenseness of the race. The admirals, their staffs, the captains of the individual ships, all were on the bridges, and there remained not only through the race to reach the battle area, but through all the fighting after they had closed with the enemy. The carefully worked-out plans for directing everything from the shelter of the conning tower were thrown aside without a thought. So there we see them, grouped in the most exposed positions on their ships, straining their eyes through the haze for the first glimpse of friend or foe, and urging those below, at the fires and the throttle, to squeeze out every fraction of a knot that boilers and turbines could be made to yield.

Word must have been received by wireless of the loss of the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary*, while the battleships were still fifty or sixty miles away, for Beatty at this time was running south faster than Jellicoe could follow. It was perhaps at this time that Hood was dispatched at full speed to add his three battle cruisers to the four that remained to Beatty. They arrived upon the scene about 6.15 p. m., shortly after Beatty had turned eastward, and swung in ahead of Beatty's column, which,



as thus reenforced, consisted of seven battle cruisers and four dreadnoughts (Plate IV). Admiral Beatty writes in terms of enthusiastic admiration of the way in which Hood brought his ships into action, and it is easy to understand the thrill with which he must have welcomed this addition to his force.

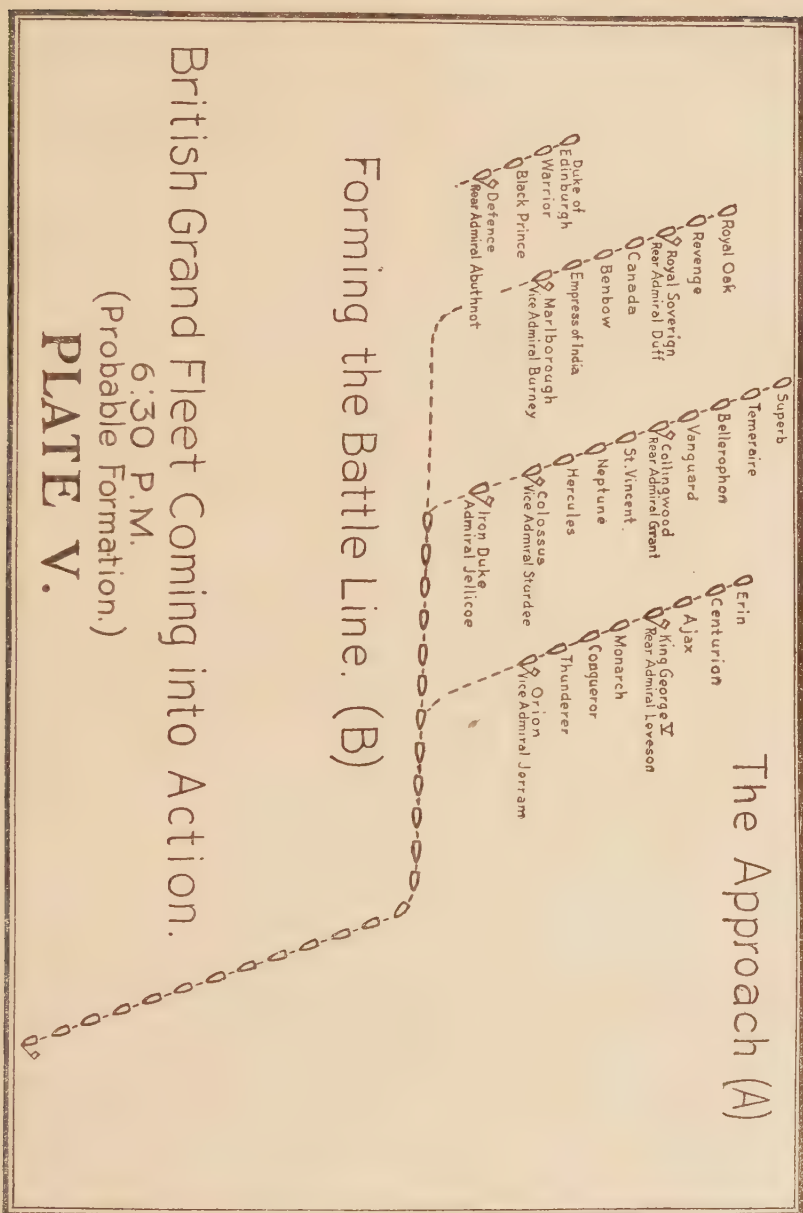
But his satisfaction was not of long duration. Hardly had the *Invincible*, Hood's flagship, settled down on her new course and opened fire than she disappeared in a great burst of smoke and flame. Here, as in the case of the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary*, the appalling suddenness and completeness of the disaster makes it impossible of explanation. The survivors from all three of the ships totaled only about one hundred, and none of these are able to throw any light upon the matter.

By this time Beatty's whole column had completed the turn from north to east, and Jellicoe was in sight to the northward with his twenty-five dreadnoughts, coming on at twenty knots or more straight for the point where Beatty's column blocked his approach. Jellicoe writes of this situation:

"Meanwhile, at 5.45 p. m., the report of guns had become audible to me, and at 5.55 p. m. flashes were visible from ahead around to the starboard beam, although in the mist no ships could be distinguished, and the position of the enemy's fleet could not be determined.

". . . At this period, when the battle fleet was meeting the battle cruisers and the Fifth Battle Squadron, great care was necessary to ensure that our own ships were not mistaken for enemy vessels."

Here is a bald description of a situation which must have been charged with almost overwhelming anxiety for the commander in chief. He knew that just ahead of him a tremendous battle was in progress, but of the disposition of the forces engaged he had only such knowledge as he could gather from the few fragmentary wireless messages that Beatty had found time to flash to him. He could see but a short distance, and he knew that through the cloud of mingled fog and smoke into which he was rushing at top speed, all ships would look much alike. That he was able to bring his great force into action and into effective





cooperation with Beatty without accident or delay is evidence of high tactical skill on his part and on that of every officer under his command; and, what is even more creditable, of supremely efficient coordination of all parts of the tremendous machine which responded so harmoniously to his will.

As Jellicoe's leading ships appeared through the fog, Beatty realized that he must make an opening in his column to let them through. Accordingly, he called upon his own fast battle cruisers for their highest speed and drew away to the eastward, at the same time signaling Admiral Evan-Thomas to reduce speed and drop back (Plate VI). The maneuver was perfectly conceived and perfectly timed. As Jellicoe approached he found Beatty's column opening before him. As he swept on through, steering south toward the head of the German line, Beatty also swung south on a course parallel and a little to the eastward, and, by virtue of his high speed, a little ahead. The result was that neither force blanketed the other for a moment, and the head of the German column a little later found itself under the concentrated fire of practically the whole British fleet. It may well have "crumpled" as Jellicoe says it did; and whether it is true or not, as British reports insist, that several of the leading ships were destroyed at this time, it appears to be true, at least, that a second battle cruiser dropped out, leaving only three of this type under Von Hipper's command.

The situation quickly passed from that shown in Plate VI to that shown in Plate VII. The British had succeeded in establishing a cap, and their position was so favorable that it looked as if nothing could save the Germans from destruction. But night was coming on, the mist was thickening into fog, and the only point of aim for either fleet was that afforded by the flash of the enemy's guns. Von Scheer, who, as Von Hipper's senior, was in command of the German forces as a whole, turned from east to west, each ship swinging independently, and sent his whole force of destroyers at top speed against the enemy. It would be difficult to imagine conditions more favorable for such an attack. Jellicoe saw the opportunity and acted upon it as quickly as did Von Scheer, with the result that as the German

# THE GREAT NAVAL BATTLE OF JUTLAND BANK

BATTLE CRUISERS AND BATTLESHIPS, ARMORED AND  
LIGHT CRUISERS, AND TORPEDO-BOAT DESTROYERS



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A broadside from the turret guns of a British battleship. In the earlier battle in the North Sea, such shells began to hit at a range of ten miles



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The "Queen Mary," sister ship of the "Lion," and the "Princess Royal," and capable of a speed of 28½ knots an hour.  
This modern British battle cruiser was sunk about half an hour after the battle was fully joined



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The "Invincible," Rear Admiral Hood's flagship, which sank almost immediately after coming into action. This British cruiser, with her sister ships "Indefatigable" and "Indomitable," was of an earlier type than the "Queen Mary," but capable of a speed of 27 knots





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The "Seydlitz," one of the latest and largest German battle cruisers, having a displacement of 24,350 tons and a speed of 28½ knots, was so badly damaged in the Battle of Jutland Bank as to require several months for repairs



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The "Pommern," a German dreadnought, 13,250 tons, admitted to have been lost. It is possible that the "Pommern" that went down in the battle may have been a recently-built and more powerful battleship of the same name



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The German light cruiser "Frauenlob," lost in the Battle of Jutland Bank. Such vessels were constantly employed by both British and German admirals, in keeping the capital ships in touch with the enemy, especially when fog and darkness increased



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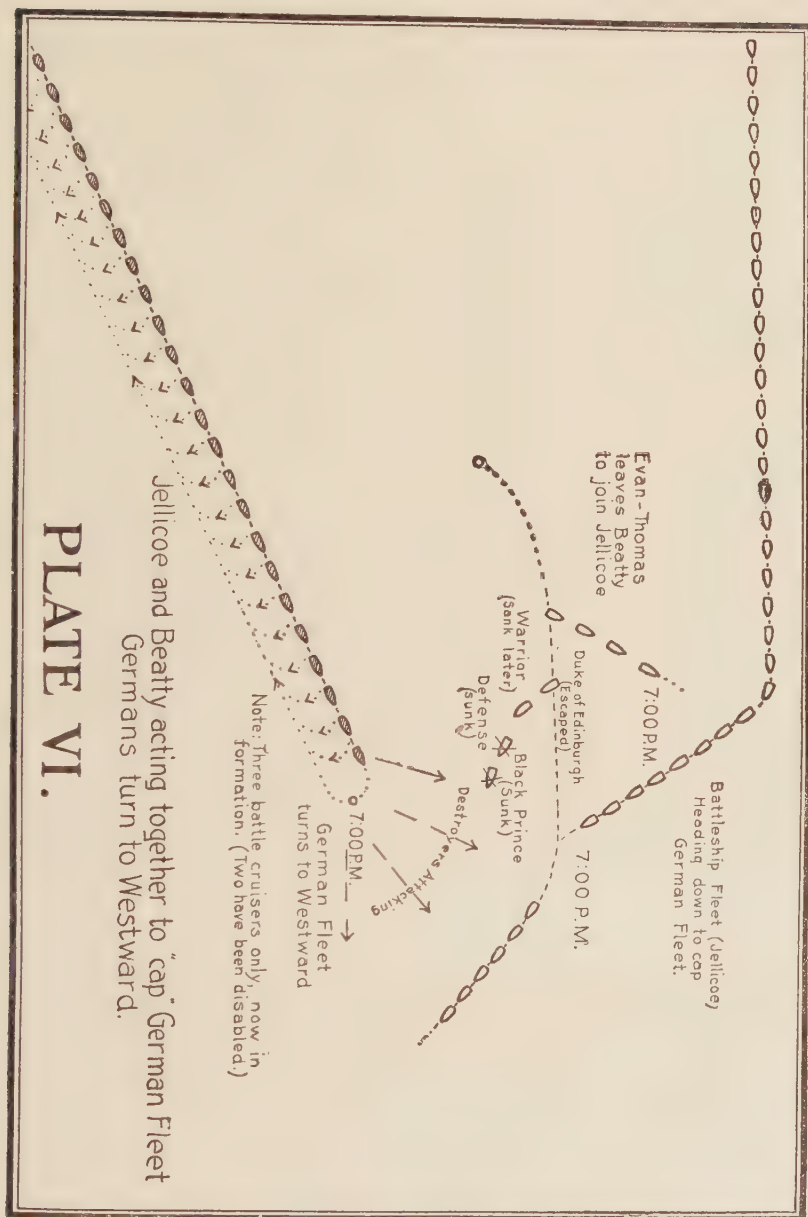
Modern British destroyers. Such vessels dashed repeatedly at full speed through the banks of fog within which the battleships were concealed, and at one time the British and German destroyers fought a battle in the gathering darkness

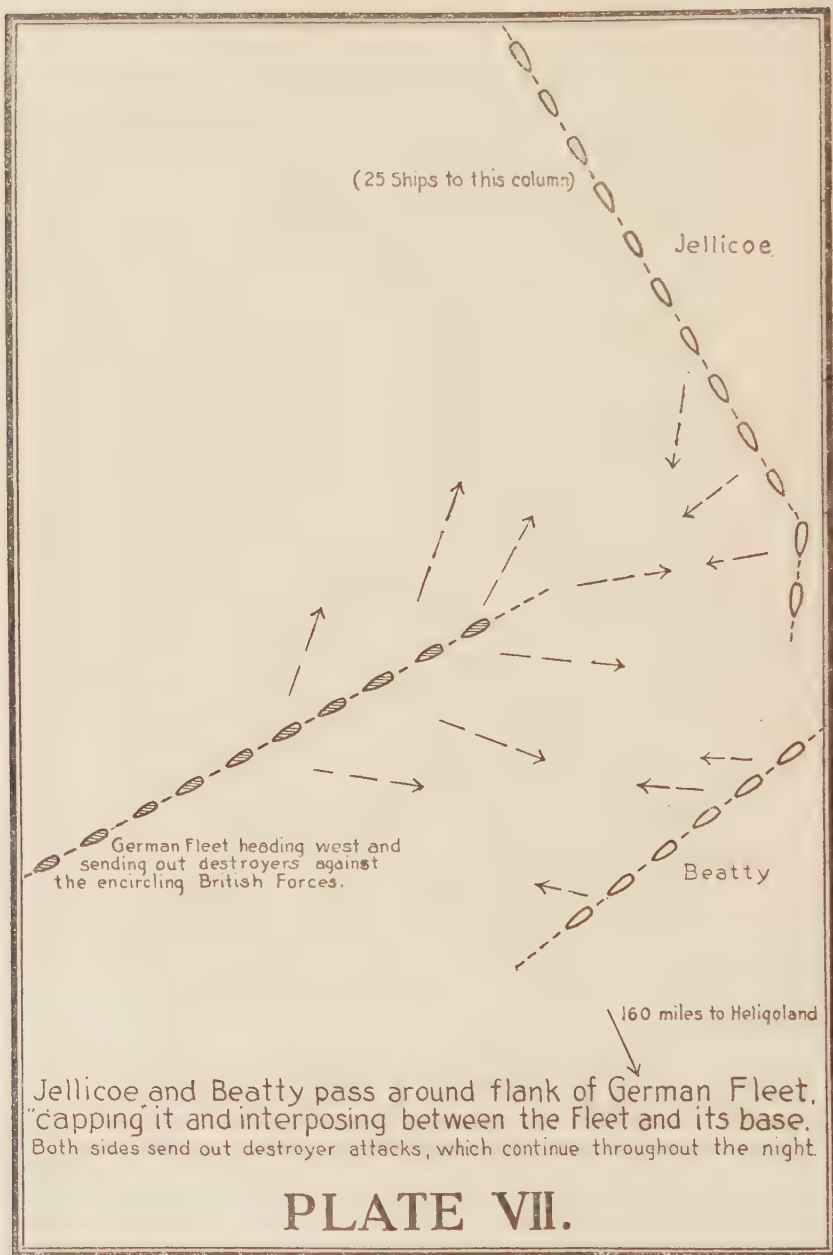




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A squadron of British armored cruisers. Four of these vessels—the "Defence," the "Black Prince," the "Warrior," and the "Duke of Edinburgh"—engaged with German battleships at short range. Only the "Duke of Edinburgh" escaped.





destroyers swept toward the British fleet they met midway the British destroyers bent on a similar mission, and a battle followed in the fog between destroyers, which broke up both attacks against the main fleets and saved the capital ships on both sides from what must otherwise have been very serious danger. Meantime, as the German fleet drew off to the westward, Jellicoe and Beatty passed completely around the German flank and reached a position to the southward and between the German fleet and its base at Helgoland (Plate VIII). By the time this was accomplished it was nearly ten o'clock, and the long day of that high northern latitude was passing into darkness rendered darker by the fog. Contact between the main fleets had been lost, and firing had ceased. Both sides continued destroyer attacks through the night, and some of these were delivered with great dash and forced home with splendid determination. The British claim to have sunk at least two of the German capital ships during these attacks. But this the Germans deny.

The Battle of Horn Reef, if that is to be its name, was at an end. The German fleet, now heading west, evidently soon afterward headed south toward the secure waters of the Helgoland Bight, which it was allowed to reach without interference by the British main fleet and apparently without discovery. The British may well have been cautious during the night about venturing far into the fog, which, as they knew, if it concealed the capital ships of Von Hipper and Von Scheer, concealed also their destroyers, and possibly a stretch of water strewn with mines laid out by the retreating enemy. It must not be forgotten, however, that the British were between the German fleet and its base when they ceased the offensive for the night, and that only a few hours, in that high latitude, separate darkness from dawn.

With daylight, which was due by two o'clock or thereabouts, and with the lifting of the fog, Jellicoe reports that he searched to the northward and found no enemy. The following day, June 2, 1916, his fleet was back in port taking account of its losses, which were undeniably great, though whether or not they were greater than those of the enemy, only the future can prove.



10:00 P.M.  
Darkness and Fog.

Germans moving West, protecting themselves  
and attacking British with destroyers  
and light cruisers.



British Forces heading off to Southward to avoid attack during  
darkness and to keep between German Fleet and its Base.  
Protecting rear with Destroyers and Light Cruisers.

PLATE VIII

## CHAPTER IV

SOME SECONDARY FEATURES OF THE  
BATTLE

ONE of the most inexplicable incidents of the day occurred as Jellicoe's fleet approached the battle area and shortly before the leading ship of his column passed through the opening in Beatty's column as already described. The four armored cruisers, *Duke of Edinburgh*, *Defence*, *Warrior*, and *Black Prince*, under Rear Admiral Arbuthnot, were in company with Jellicoe, but separated from his main force by several miles. These ships were lightly armed and very lightly armored, and had absolutely no excuse for taking part in the main battle. Yet they now appeared, somewhat in advance of the main fleet and to the westward of it, standing down ahead of Evan-Thomas's division of battleships, which, as has been explained, had dropped back to allow Jellicoe to pass ahead of them. As Arbuthnot appeared from the mist, several German ships opened on him at short range, and within a very few moments three of his four ships were destroyed. The *Defence* and *Black Prince* were sunk immediately. The *Warrior* was so badly damaged that she sank during the night while trying to make port. The *Duke of Edinburgh* escaped.

Another incident belonging to this phase of the battle was the jamming of the steering gear of the *Warspite*, of Admiral Evan-Thomas's division of dreadnoughts. Apparently the helm jammed when in the hard-over position, and the ship for some time ran around in a circle. Through the whole of this time she was under heavy fire, and is reported to have been struck more than one hundred times by heavy shells, in spite of which she later returned to her position in column and continued the fight. In the course of her erratic maneuvers, while not under control, she circled around the *Warrior* and received so much of the fire intended for that ship as to justify the belief that her accident saved the *Warrior* from immediate destruction and made it pos-

sible, later, to rescue her crew before she finally sank, as she did during the night following the battle. It was for a time believed that the *Warspite* had deliberately intervened to save the *Warrior*, and there was much talk of the "chivalry" of the *Warspite's* commander in thus risking his own ship to save another—this from those who overlooked the fact that the duty of the *Warspite*, as one of the most valuable fighting units of the fleet, was to keep place in line as long as possible, and to carry out the general battle plan; which, of course, is exactly what the *Warspite* did to the best of her ability.

It is an interesting fact that of the small number of capital ships lost or disabled, four were flagships. Two rear admirals, Hood and Arbuthnot, went down with their ships. Two vice admirals, Von Hipper and Burney, shifted their flags in the thickest of the fight, Von Hipper from the *Lützow* to the *Moltke*, Burney from the *Marlborough* to the *Revenge*.

A large part of Admiral Jellicoe's official report deals with the work of the light cruisers and destroyers, which, while necessarily restricted to a secondary rôle, contributed in many ways to the operations of the main fighting forces, securing and transmitting information, attacking at critical times, and repelling attacks from the corresponding craft of the enemy. All of these tasks took on a special importance as the afternoon advanced, because of the decreasing visibility due to fog and darkness. The light cruisers were constantly employed in keeping touch with the enemy, whose capital ships they approached at times to within two or three thousand yards. And the destroyers of both fleets were repeatedly sent at full speed through banks of fog within which the enemy battleships were known to be concealed. It is rather remarkable that so few of either type were lost, and still more remarkable, so far as the destroyers are concerned, that so few of the large ships were torpedoed.

The *Marlborough* was struck and badly damaged, but she made her way safely to port. The *Frauenlob*, *Rostock*, and *Pommern* were sunk. And that is the whole story so far as known at present. Yet several hundred torpedoes must have been discharged, most of them at ranges within 5,000 yards. It looks a

little as if the world would be obliged to modify the view that has been held of late with reference to the efficiency of the torpedo—or at least of the torpedo as carried by the destroyer.

The loss of the three large battle cruisers, *Indefatigable*, *Invincible*, and *Queen Mary* is, and will always remain, the most dramatic incident of the battle, and the most inexplicable. It is doubtful if we shall ever know the facts, but that something more than gunfire was involved is made clear by the fact that in each case the ship was destroyed by an explosion. Whether this was due to a shell actually penetrating the magazine, or to the ignition of exposed charges of powder, or to a torpedo or a mine exploding outside in the vicinity of the magazine, it is impossible to do more than conjecture. There is a suggestion of something known, but kept back, in the following paragraph from a description of the battle by Mr. Arthur Pollen, which is presumably based upon information furnished by the British admiralty:

“As to the true explanation of the loss of the three ships that did blow up, the admiralty, no doubt, will give this to the public if it is thought wise to do so. But there can be no harm in saying this. The explanation of the sinking of each of these ships by a single lucky shot—both they and practically all the other cruisers were hit repeatedly by shots that did no harm—is, in the first place, identical. Next, it does not lie in the fact that the ships were insufficiently armored to keep out big shell. Next, the fatal explosion was not caused by a mine or by a torpedo. Lastly, it is in no sense due to any instability or any other dangerous characteristic of the propellants or explosives carried on board. I am free to confess that when I first heard of these ships going down as rapidly as they did, one of two conclusions seemed to be irresistible—either a shell had penetrated the lightly armored sides and burst in the magazine, or a mine or torpedo had exploded immediately beneath it. But neither explanation is right.”

One of the most striking and surprising features about the battle is the closeness with which it followed conventional lines, both in the types of vessels and weapons used and in the manner of using them. Neither submarines nor Zeppelins played any



part, although both were at hand. Some effective scouting was done by an aeroplane sent up from one of the British cruisers early in the afternoon, and the British report that they saw and fired on a Zeppelin early in the morning of June 1, 1916. But this is all.

There have been stories for many months of a 17-inch gun of marvelous power carried by German dreadnoughts, but no such weapon made its appearance on this occasion.

And the tactics employed on both sides were as conventional as the weapons used. The fight was a running fight in parallel columns from the moment when Beatty and Von Hipper turned simultaneously toward the south upon their first contact with each other, until night and fog separated them at the end. Beatty's constant effort to secure a "cap" contained no element of novelty, and Von Hipper's reply, refusing the cap by turning his head away and swinging slowly on a parallel interior curve, was the conventional, as it was the proper, reply. Unfortunately, as we shall presently have occasion to note, the German fleet ultimately allowed itself to be capped, with results which ought to have been far more disastrous than they actually were. The destroyers availed themselves of the opportunities for attack presented from time to time by smoke and fog, and their drive was stopped by opposing destroyers.

So little is known of the German injuries that there is hardly sufficient ground for comment on the British marksmanship, but it does not appear to have been what the world had expected. Exactly the reverse is true of the German marksmanship, especially at long ranges. It was surprisingly good, and the most surprising thing about it was the promptness with which it found the target. The *Indefatigable* was blown up ten minutes after she came under fire. Hood, in the *Invincible*, had barely gained his place in line ahead of Beatty's column when the ship was smothered by a perfect avalanche of shells. If it is true that the Germans had the best of the fight so far as material damage is concerned, the explanation must be sought in their unexpectedly excellent marksmanship, with, perhaps, some sinister factor added, either of weakness in the British ships or

of amazing power in the German shells, yet to be made known. It should be noted that the sinking of the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary* belongs to a phase of battle in which Beatty had a distinct advantage of force, his six battle cruisers being opposed to five.

While the torpedo, as has been said, played no important part in the action, the destroyers on both sides appear to have been active and enterprising, and if they accomplished little in a material way, the threat involved in their presence and their activity had an important moral effect at several critical stages of the battle. When Jellicoe decided not to force his offensive during the night he was no doubt influenced in a large degree by the menace of the German destroyers.

Destroyers, too, contributed indirectly to the loss of Arbuthnot's armored cruisers. When Jellicoe's fleet was seen approaching, "appearing shadowlike from the haze bank to the north-east," the German destroyers were thrown against them, and it was apparently to meet and check this threat that Rear Admiral Arbuthnot pushed forward with his armored cruisers into the area between the two main battle lines. It may be that he could not see what lay behind the thrust he sought to parry. Both the British and the German stories of the battle assume that he was surprised. But whether this is true or not, the fact is that it was in seeking to shield the battleships from a destroyer attack that he came under fire of the main German force and lost three of his ships almost immediately; for the *Warrior*, although she remained afloat for several hours, was doomed from the first.

## CHAPTER V

## LOSSES AND TACTICS

THE British losses as reported officially, and no doubt truthfully, are as follows:

BATTLE CRUISERS:	Tonnage	Officers and Men
<i>Queen Mary</i> . . . . .	27,500	1,000
<i>Invincible</i> . . . . .	17,250	790
<i>Indefatigable</i> . . . . .	18,750	780
ARMORED CRUISERS:		
<i>Defence</i> . . . . .	14,600	850
<i>Black Prince</i> . . . . .	13,500	750
<i>Warrior</i> . . . . .	13,500	750
DESTROYERS:		
<i>Tipperary</i> . . . . .	1,850	160
<i>Turbulent</i> . . . . .	980	100
<i>Fortune</i> . . . . .	950	100
<i>Sparrowhawk</i> . . . . .	935	100
<i>Ardent</i> . . . . .	950	100
<i>Nestor</i> . . . . .	950	100
<i>Nomad</i> . . . . .	950	100
<i>Shark</i> . . . . .	950	100

The reported German losses are as follows. The actual losses may be much greater:

BATTLE CRUISER:	Tonnage	Officers and Men
<i>Lützow</i> . . . . .	28,000	1,150
BATTLESHIP:		
<i>Pommern</i> . . . . .	13,040	736

LIGHT CRUISERS:	Tonnage	Officers and Men
<i>Wiesbaden</i> . . . . .	.....	...
<i>Frauenlob</i> . . . . .	2,657	281
<i>Elbing</i> . . . . .	.....	...
<i>Rostock</i> . . . . .	4,820	373
DESTROYERS:		
Five . . . . .	.....	...

*Total Tonnage Lost*

British.....117,150

German..... 60,720 (acknowledged)

*Total Personnel Lost*

British.....6,105

German.....2,414 (acknowledged)

When the losses above given are analyzed they are found to be much less favorable to the German side than they appear to be on the surface. To begin with, we may eliminate the three armored cruisers on the British side as of no military value whatever. This reduces the *effective* tonnage lost on the British side by more than 40,000 tons.

The *Queen Mary* and the *Lützow* offset each other.

If we accept the German claim that the *Pommern*, which was lost, was actually the old predreadnought of that name, it is fair to say that she offsets the *Invincible*. There is, however, very good reason for believing that she was a new and very powerful dreadnought. If this is the case, her loss easily offsets that of both the *Invincible* and the *Indefatigable*. Accepting the German statement, however, as we have done at all other points, we may say that so far as *effective* capital ships are concerned, the British lost one more than the Germans. This, after all, is not a very great difference, and it is to a large extent offset by the loss of four light cruisers which the German admiralty admit. In destroyers the advantage is with the Germans.

With regard to the armored cruisers already referred to, it is interesting to note the fact that these three ships were practically



presented to the Germans, thus paralleling the fate of their sister ships, the *Cressy*, *Hogue*, and *Aboukir*, which, as will be remembered, were destroyed by a submarine in September, 1914, under conditions of inexplicable carelessness. The military loss represented by all six of these ships was small (disregarding the loss of personnel), but they all selected a fate which was so timed, and in its character so spectacular, as to contribute enormously to the lessening of the prestige with which the British navy had entered upon the war.

As bearing still further upon the comparative losses of the battle, account must be taken of ships seriously injured. Of these, reports from sources apparently unprejudiced insist that the German fleet has a large number and that the number includes several of the most powerful ships that took part in the battle. It is known that the *Seydlitz*, one of the latest and largest of the German battle cruisers, was so badly damaged that it will be many months before she can take the sea again. There are stories of two other large ships which reached port in such a condition that it was necessary to dock them at once to keep them from sinking. Contrasted with this is the fact that the British ships which reached port were but little injured. This gives an air of probability to the story that the German fire tactics provided for concentrating the fire of several of their ships on some one ship of the enemy's line until she was destroyed. This would explain the otherwise inexplicable fact that, while the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary* were being overwhelmed, the ships ahead and astern of them were hardly struck at all.

It may well be that the total damage done the German ships by the steady pounding of the whole line vastly exceeds the total received by the British ships. Something will be known on this subject when it becomes clear that the Germans are, or are not, ready to take the sea again. If their losses and their injuries were as unimportant as they would have the world believe, if their victory was as great as they claim that it was, they should be ready at an early date to challenge the British again, this time with a fleet practically intact as to ships, and with a personnel fired with enthusiastic confidence in its own superiority.

If, instead of this, they resume the attitude of evasion which they have maintained so long, the inference will be plain that they have not given the world the truth with regard to what the battle of May 31, 1916, meant to them.

A significant fact in this connection is that, regardless of what others may say on the subject, the officers and men of the British navy are convinced that the victory was with them, and are eager for another chance at the enemy, which they fully believe they would have destroyed if night and fog had not intervened to stay their hand.

The net result of the battle as seen by the world, after careful appraisal of the claims and counterclaims on both sides, is that England retains the full command of the sea, with every prospect of retaining it indefinitely, but that the British navy has, for the moment, lost something of the prestige which it has enjoyed since the days of Nelson and Jervis. There is nothing to support the belief that the control of the North Sea or of any other sea has passed, or by any conceivable combination of circumstances can pass, into the hands of Germany during the present war, or as a result of the war.

All accounts of the battle by those who participated in it represent the weather as capricious. The afternoon came in with a smooth sea, a light wind, and a clear, though somewhat hazy, atmosphere. The smoke of the German ships was made out at a distance which must have been close to twenty miles, and the range-finding as Beatty and Von Hipper closed must have been almost perfect, as is proved by the promptness with which the Germans began making hits on the *Queen Mary* and the *Indefatigable*. But this did not continue long. Little wisps of fog began to gather here and there, drifting about, rising from time to time and then settling down and gathering in clouds that at times cut off the view even close at hand.

As the sun dropped toward the horizon it lighted up the western sky with a glow against which the British ships were clearly outlined, forming a perfect target, while the dark-colored German ships to the eastward were projected against a background of fog as gray as themselves. It is interesting to recall

the fact that these are exactly the conditions which existed when the British and German squadrons in the Pacific met off Coronel. In that case, as in the present one, the British fleet was to the westward, clearly silhouetted against the twilight sky. And the fate of the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary* was not more sudden or more tragic than that of the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*. It may be that the unfavorable conditions were a matter of luck in both cases. But it may be also that the Germans chose the time of day for fighting in each case to accord with the position which they expected to occupy.

The British complain much of their bad luck, but there are well-recognized advantages of position with regard to light and wind and sea, and the Germans seem to have the luck, if luck it be, to find these advantages habitually on their side.

The British call it luck that both in the battle off Horn Reef and that off Dogger Bank the Germans escaped destruction through the coming on of night. But how would this claim look if it were shown that the Germans timed their movements with direct regard for this—allowing themselves time for a decided thrust, to be followed by withdrawal under cover of night before they could be brought to a final reckoning? A careful study of the operations of the present war shows, on both sea and land, a painstaking attention on the German side to every detail, however small; and instances are not rare in which they have benefited from this in ways which could hardly have been anticipated.

#### TACTICS

There has been much discussion of the tactics of the battle. And critics, not in foreign countries alone, but in England, have pointed out errors of Beatty and Jellicoe, while many more have come to their defense and shown conclusively that everything done was wisely done, and that the escape of the German fleet and the losses by the British fleet were due not to bad management but to bad luck.

The first point selected for criticism by those who venture to criticize is the initial separation of Beatty's force from Jellicoe's

by from sixty to seventy miles. This certainly proved unfortunate, and if it was deliberately planned it is undoubtedly open to criticism. A reference, however, to the letter which Mr. Balfour addressed to the mayors of Yarmouth and Lowestoft on May 8, 1916, suggests an explanation which makes the separation of the two forces seem a reasonable one. Mr. Balfour states, for the reassurance of the mayors and their people, that a policy is to be adopted of keeping a force of fast and powerful ships in certain ports near the English Channel, where they will be ready to sally forth at short notice to run down any force which may venture to cross the North Sea, whether for raiding or for any other purpose. This foreshadows the assignment of a force of battle cruisers to the south of England, and it is altogether probable that Beatty, instead of having been detached by Jellicoe for operations to the southward, had, in fact, gone out directly from the mouth of the Thames to sweep northward toward a junction with the main fleet. This view of the matter is confirmed by the opening sentence of Beatty's official report to Jellicoe:

"I have the honor to report that at 2.37 p. m. on 31st May, 1916, I was cruising and steering to the northward to join your flag."

Another point which has been criticized is the action of Beatty in turning south instead of north when he first found himself in touch with Von Hipper.

It is not clear from the evidence at hand whether he followed Von Hipper in this move or whether Von Hipper followed him. If Von Hipper headed south, Beatty could not well refuse to follow him. Beatty was there to fight if there was a chance to fight, and there is no question that in heading south, whether he was following Von Hipper's lead or taking the lead himself, he took the one course which made the existing chance a certainty.

From this point of view he was right. From another point of view he was wrong, for he was running at full speed directly away from his own supports and directly toward those of his opponent. He thought, and Jellicoe appears to have thought, that the Germans did not wish to fight. But when Beatty finally turned north, both Von Hipper and Von Scheer followed readily enough, although they must have known pretty accurately what



lay ahead of them. Beatty's error, then, if error it was, seems to have been not so much in judging the tactical situation as in judging the spirit of his opponent.

Very severe criticism has been directed against Beatty for fighting at comparatively short ranges—9,000 to 14,000 yards—when he had a sufficient excess of speed to choose his distance. This is hardly a fair criticism of the early stages of the battle, as he was then opposed to ships of the same type as his own, so that if he was accepting a disadvantage for himself, he was forcing the same disadvantage upon his opponent. And after all, 14,000 yards is not a short range, though it is certainly much shorter to-day than it would have been ten years ago.

When, in the later stages of the battle, he was opposed to dreadnoughts, it would perhaps have been wiser to maintain a range of from 18,000 to 20,000 yards, but the situation was complicated by the necessity of holding the enemy and leading him to the northward, and it is not possible to say with any confidence that he could have done this if he had held off at a distance as great as prudence might have suggested. Circumstances placed him in a position where it seemed to him desirable to forget the distinction between his ships and battleships, and this is exactly what he did.

Broadly speaking, it must be said that Beatty's course throughout the day was, to quote the favorite expression of British writers on naval matters, "in keeping with the best traditions of the service." And while it was bold and dashing, it was entirely free from the rashness which the British public has been a little inclined to attribute to him since the Dogger Bank engagement.

The only further criticism of the conduct of the battle is that which insists that the German fleet should not have been allowed to escape. And here it is difficult to find an explanation which is at the same time an excuse. Of the situation at 9 p. m. Admiral Jellicoe writes that he had maneuvered into a very advantageous position, *in which his fleet was interposed between the German fleet and the German base*. He then goes on to say that the threat of destroyer attack during the rapidly approaching darkness made it necessary to dispose the fleet with a view to its

safety, while providing for a renewal of the action at daylight. Accordingly, he "maneuvered so as to remain between the Germans and their base, placing flotillas of destroyers where they could protect the fleet and attack the heavy German ships."

Admiral Beatty reported that he did not consider it desirable or proper to engage the German battle fleet during the dark hours, as the *strategical position made it appear certain he could locate them at daylight under most favorable circumstances.*

Here, then, is the situation between nine and ten o'clock at night, when the approach of darkness made it seem desirable to call a halt for the night—a huge fleet, of more than thirty capital ships, was interposed between the Germans and their base. The general position of the Germans was known, and destroyers, of which the British had at least seventy-five available, were so disposed as to keep in touch with the Germans and attack them during the night. The German fleet was slower than the British fleet by several knots, and if the statements by Jellicoe and Beatty of the damage done are even approximately true, Von Hipper and Von Scheer must have been embarrassed by the necessity of caring for a large number of badly crippled ships. The night is short in that high latitude—not over five hours at the maximum.

And this is the report of what happened at daylight:

"At daylight on the first of June the battle fleet, being southward of Horn Reef, turned northward in search of the enemy vessels, and for the purpose of collecting our own cruisers and torpedo-boat destroyers. The visibility early on the first of June was three to four miles less than on May 31, and the torpedo-boat destroyers, being out of visual touch, did not rejoin the fleet until 9 a. m. The British fleet remained in the proximity of the battle field and near the line of approach to German ports until 11 a. m., in spite of the disadvantages of long distances from fleet bases and the danger incurred in waters adjacent to the enemy's coasts from submarines and torpedo craft.

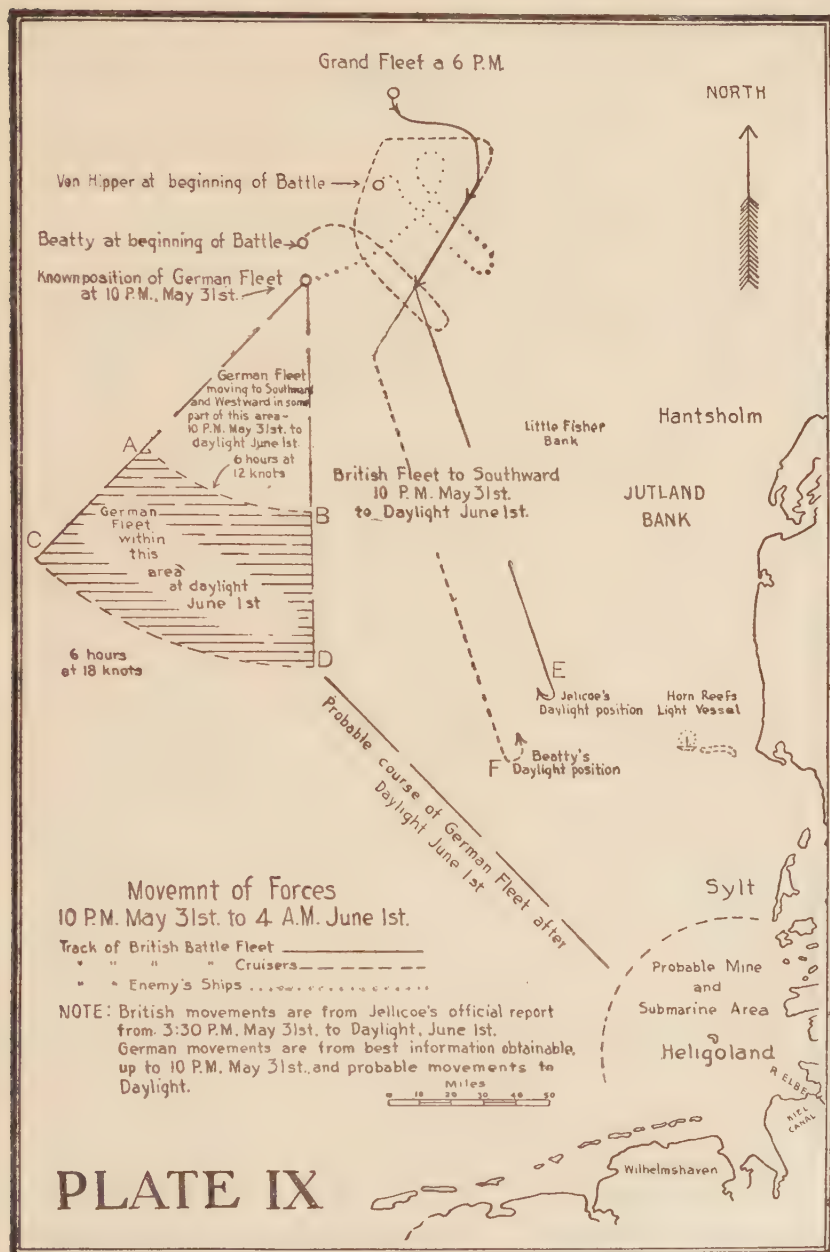
"The enemy, however, made no sign, and I was reluctantly compelled to the conclusion that the High Sea Fleet had returned into port. Subsequent events proved this assumption to have

been correct. Our position must have been known to the enemy, as, at 4 a. m., the fleet engaged a Zeppelin about five minutes, during which time she had ample opportunity to note and subsequently report the position and course of the British fleet."

Here is the mystery of the Battle of Horn Reef, and here we may place our finger on the point at which the explanation lies (if we could only make out what the explanation is) of the reason why this battle cannot take rank, either in its conduct or in its results, with the greatest naval battles of history—with Trafalgar and the Nile, to speak only of English history. It is an unfinished battle; inconclusive, indecisive. And in this respect it cannot be changed by later news of greater losses than are now known. When Jellicoe, with a force materially superior to that commanded by Von Scheer *and with higher speed*, had interposed between the latter and his base, it would seem that there should have been no escape for the German fleet from absolute destruction. It should have been "played" during the night, and either held or driven northward. How it could work around the flank of the British fleet and be out of sight at dawn is impossible of comprehension even when we have made due allowance for low visibility. And its disappearance was complete. The only German force that was seen was a lone Zeppelin, which was engaged for five minutes. The mystery is increased by Jellicoe's statement that at daylight he "turned northward in search of the enemy's vessels."

His story ends with something in the nature of a reproach for the Germans because they did not return, although "our position must have been known to them."

Let us consider what the situation actually was at daylight. The German fleet, as a whole, had a maximum speed of perhaps 18 knots when fresh from port, and with every ship in perfect condition. According to the English account it had suffered very severely, many of its units being badly crippled. It is inconceivable that it was in a condition when Jellicoe lost touch with it at ten o'clock at night to make anything like its maximum speed without deserting these cripples. Let us suppose, however, that it could and did make 18 knots in some direction be-





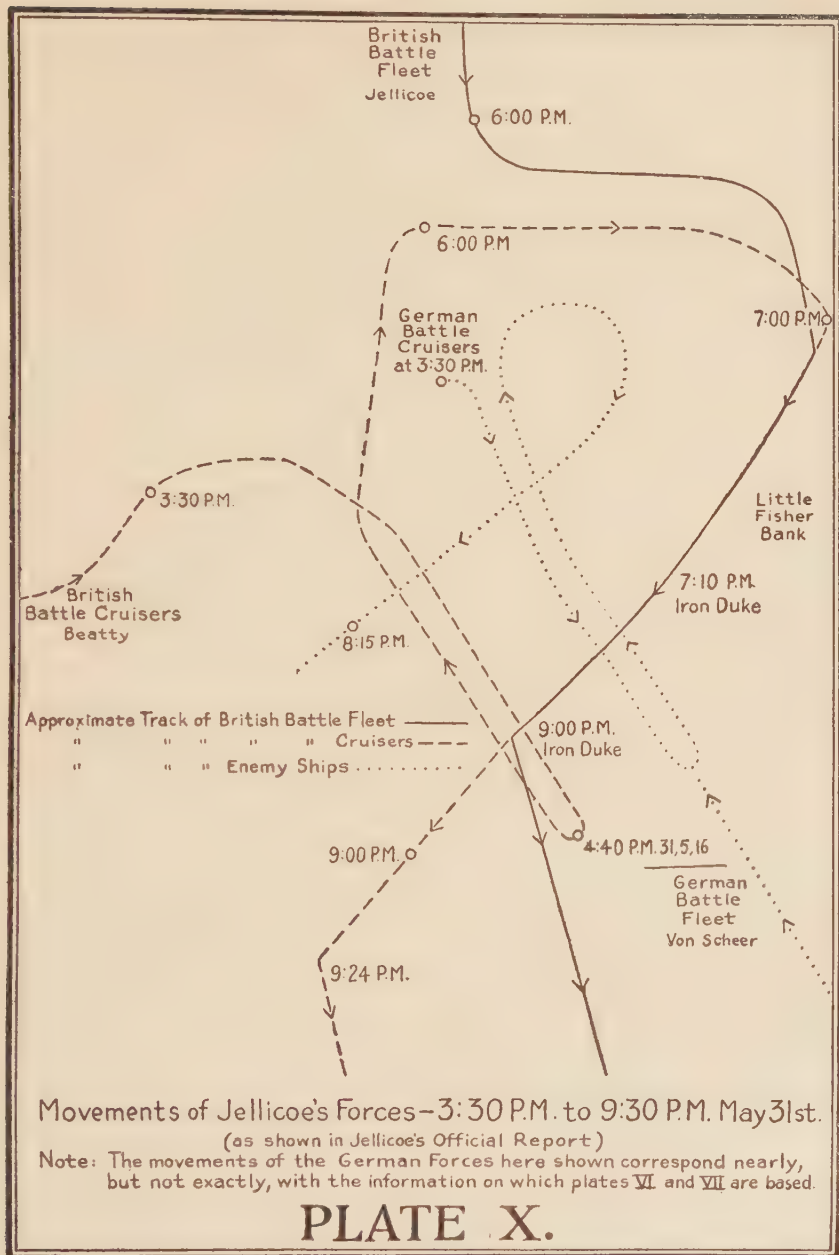
tween 10 p. m. and 4 a. m. It would run in that time 108 miles. If, therefore, we draw a circle around the point at which it was known to have been at ten o'clock, with 108 miles as a radius, we shall have a circle beyond which it cannot have passed at 4 a. m. (Plate IX).

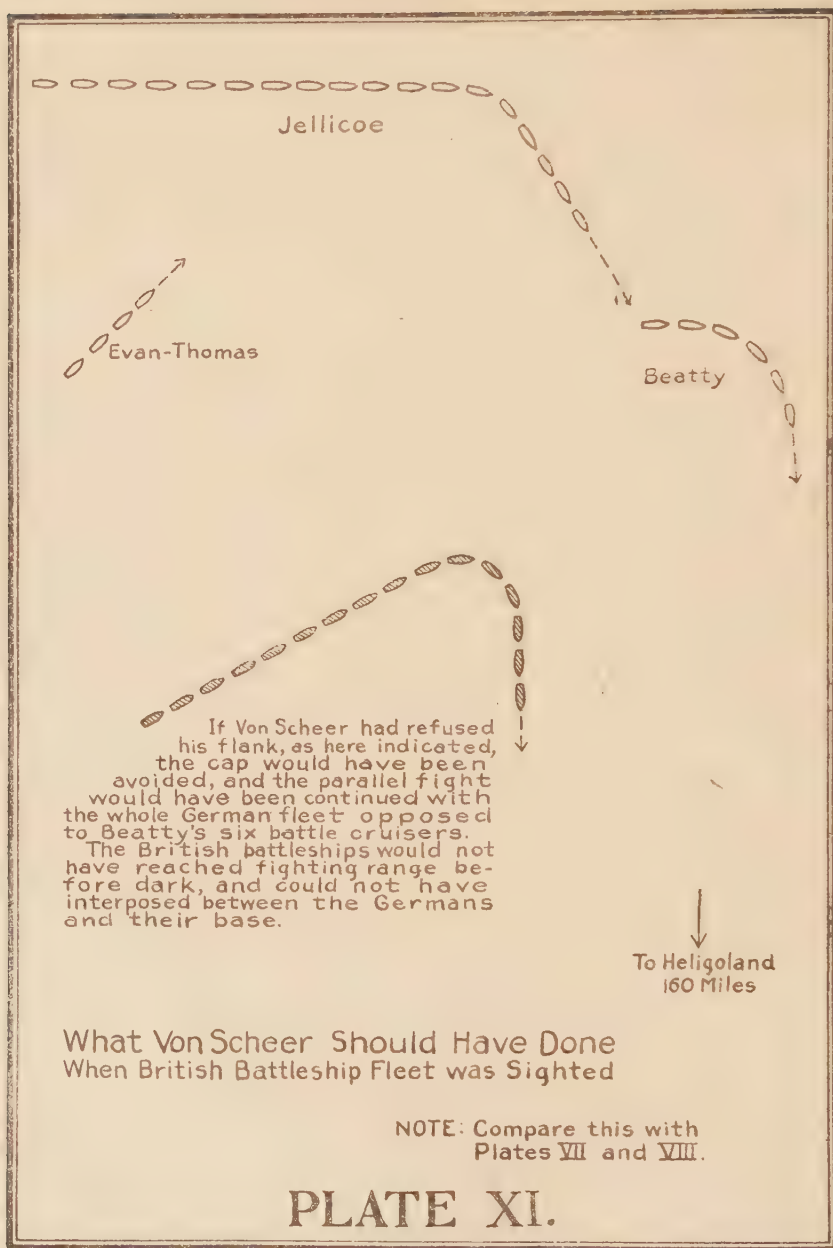
If we assume a lower limit for its speed, say 12 knots, we may draw another circle with 72 miles as a radius, and say that in all probability the fleet has passed beyond this circle, in some direction, by 4 a. m. We have now narrowed the space within which the German fleet may be at 4 a. m. of June 1, 1916, to the narrow area between our two circles.

But we know that the fleet, if it is in reality badly crippled, will be under the necessity of making its way back to a base at once, and that the detour which it makes to avoid the British fleet will accordingly be as slight as possible. It certainly will not attempt to reach Helgoland by running north or east. It will doubtless start off toward the west or southwest and swing around to the south and southeast as soon as Von Scheer feels confident of having cleared the western flank of the British fleet. We may then draw two bounding lines from the point which the Germans are known to have occupied at ten o'clock, and feel reasonably sure that four o'clock will find them between these lines. In other words, Jellicoe knew with almost mathematical certainty that at four o'clock on the morning of June 1, 1916, the German fleet was within the area *A, B, C, D*, Plate IX. His own more powerful fleet was at *E* and *F*, *still between the Germans and their base*, with an excess of speed of at least three knots, and probably much more than this. He searched *to the north*, and not finding them there, "was reluctantly compelled to the conclusion that the High Sea Fleet had returned into port." He accordingly returned to port himself.

#### THE GERMAN TACTICS

If it is true that the British blundered in allowing the Germans to escape from a trap from which escape should have been impossible, it is equally true that the Germans blundered in allow-





ing themselves to be caught in such a trap. In the early part of the battle the German tactics were all that they should have been. In turning south, when Beatty's force was sighted, Von Hipper was right from every point of view, for he was closing with Von Scheer while drawing Beatty away from Jellicoe. He was equally sound a little later when he turned north, for he did not turn until he had been joined by Von Scheer. He was still sound when at six o'clock he turned east, refusing to be capped, for there was as yet no threat of any important increase in the force to which he was opposed. His mistake—or that of his superior, Von Scheer—came when the British battleships were sighted to the northeastward, heading down across his course. He knew, or should have known, that he was now opposed by a force overwhelmingly superior to his own and with considerably higher speed; and yet he not only did not attempt to withdraw, but held his course and allowed himself to be capped, thus deliberately accepting battle with a greatly superior force and with conditions the most unfavorable that could have been devised. That he suffered much at this point, as he undoubtedly did, was the result of his own bad tactics. That he suffered less than he deserved was the result of the equally bad tactics on the part of his opponent.

As soon as the British battleships were seen approaching the German fleet should have turned south and proceeded at full speed (Plate X), not necessarily with intent to refuse battle permanently, but with intent to refuse it until conditions could be made more favorable than they were at this time. There would have been no difficulty about reproducing on a larger scale the parallel fight which had marked the earlier phases of the battle; and with night coming on and the weather thickening, this would have reduced the British advantage to a minimum. This plan would, moreover, have led the British straight toward the mine and submarine area of the Helgoland Bight; or, if they refused to be so led, would have made it necessary for them to abandon the fight.

It is true, of course, that they did abandon the fight in spite of the great advantage which the German tactics gave them,



but it is equally true that the German admiral had no reason to hope for anything so amazingly fortunate for his reputation as a tactician.

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## CHAPTER VI

### DEATH OF LORD KITCHENER—OTHER EVENTS OF THE SECOND YEAR

THE night of June 7, 1916, a storm raged along the Scottish shore. There was wind, rain, and high seas. Toward dusk a British cruiser approached a point on the extreme northerly end of the coast and took aboard Earl Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, and his staff. Among those with him were Lieutenant Colonel Oswald Arthur Fitzgerald, his military secretary; Brigadier General Arthur Ellershaw, one of the war secretary's advisers; Sir Hay Frederick Donaldson, munitions expert, and Hugh James O'Beirne, former counselor at the British embassy in Petrograd and for some time secretary of the embassy in Washington.

The cruiser, which was the *Hampshire*, of an old class, put to sea and headed for Archangel, whence Lord Kitchener was to travel to Petrograd for a war council with the czar and his generals. About eight o'clock, only an hour after the party embarked, a mine or torpedo struck the *Hampshire* when she was two miles from land between Merwick Head and Borough Brisay, west of the Orkney Islands. It is supposed that the cruiser's magazine blew up. Persons on shore saw a fire break out amidships, and many craft went to her assistance, although a north-west gale was blowing and the sea was rough.

Four boats got away from the *Hampshire*, all of which were swamped. According to one report Lord Kitchener and his staff were lost after leaving the cruiser, but a survivor said that he was last seen on the bridge with Captain Herbert J. Savill, her commander. According to this man Kitchener had on a raincoat and held a walking stick in his hand. He said that the two

men calmly watched preparations for departure and saw at least two lifeboats smashed against the ship's side.

Twenty minutes after being torpedoed the *Hampshire* sank, with a loss of 300 lives.

On July 9, 1916, two days after the *Hampshire* went down, eleven men of the cruiser reached the Orkneys, after forty-eight hours buffeting by the waves upon a raft. The body of Colonel Fitzgerald was washed ashore the same day of the sinking, but the sea did not give up Kitchener or any of the other members of his staff.

The Italian admiralty made known June 9, 1916, that the transport *Principe Umberto* had fallen victim to a submarine in the Adriatic with a large loss of life. Estimates of the dead ran from 400 to 500.

King George and Queen Mary attended a memorial service at St. Paul's in honor of Kitchener on June 13, 1916, when many of the most prominent officials and citizens of the realm were present. They had a large military escort to and from the cathedral in respect to the dead war minister. Other services were held at Canterbury and in many cities through the kingdom.

On the night of June 18, 1916, a squadron of Russian submarines, destroyers and torpedo boats surprised a German convoy of merchant vessels at a point southeast of Stockholm and not far from Swedish waters. Owing to the heavy losses of German shipping in the Baltic practically all Teuton ships in that sea traveled under escort only, and there was a dozen or more vessels in the convoy. An engagement took place lasting forty-five minutes, during which the Russians sank the auxiliary cruiser *Herzmann*, capturing her crew and two other craft, one of which was believed to have been a destroyer. In the confusion all of the merchant ships reached the Swedish coast and other destroyers and armed trawlers accompanying them made good their escape. Berlin admitted the loss, adding that the *Herzmann's* commander and most of her crew were saved.

During the night of June 16, 1916, the British destroyer *Eden* collided with the transport *France* in the English Channel and sank. Thirty-one men and officers escaped.

The German submarine *U-35*, commanded by Lieutenant von Arnault, put into Cartagena, Spain, June 21, 1916, after a 1,500 mile run from Pola with a personal letter to King Alfonso, signed by Kaiser Wilhelm. The missive bore thanks for the treatment of German refugees from the Kameruns who had been interned in Spain, and the submarine also brought hospital supplies for the fugitives. Its arrival made a strong impression on the Spanish public and was taken as a new sign of Germany's power. No such trip ever had been made before for such a purpose. It was a precedent in the communication of kings.

The British steamship *Brussels*, carrying freight and a number of passengers, most of whom were Belgian refugees bound from Rotterdam to Tillbury, a London suburb, was captured in the channel by German destroyers and taken to Zeebrugge, Belgium on the night of June 23, 1916. The incident proved that German warcraft were again far afield. It was said that the capture had been made by means of previous information as to the time of the *Brussels's* sailing and with the aid of a spy. Her course lay about forty miles north of Zeebrugge, and a suspected passenger was seen to wave a lantern several times before the destroyers came up.

Captain Fryatt attempted to ram the nearest vessel and escape, but the effort failed and he was arrested and charged with piracy. Germany had announced early in the war that she would consider any merchant captain who made a hostile move, even in defense of his vessel, as a *franc-tireur*.

Loss of the Italian auxiliary cruiser *Citta di Messina*, 3,495 tons, and the French destroyer *Fourche* was announced by Paris June 25, 1916. The *Messina* was carrying troops across the Strait of Otranto when a submarine torpedoed her. The *Fourche*, serving as a convoy, gave pursuit without result, then turned back to save such survivors as she could. Within a few minutes she was struck by a second torpedo and sunk. All on board the two vessels, probably 300 men, were drowned.

The Austrians lost two transports in the harbor of Durazzo, June 26, 1916, when Italian submarines succeeded in passing the forts and inflicting a heavy blow. Both ships had troops, arms

and ammunition aboard, according to a Rome report. The casualties were unknown.

Petrograd announced that Russian torpedo craft intercepted a large convoy of Turkish sailing vessels in the Black Sea on June 29, 1916, and destroyed fifty-four ships. The attack took place off the Anatolian coast, and several hundred men were believed to have been drowned. If the number of ships sunk was correct it established a record for the war.

The former German warship *Goeben*, renamed the *Sultan Selim*, shelled Tournose, a Russian Black Sea port, on July 3, 1916, and did considerable damage. One steamship in the harbor went down as a result of shell fire and large oil works near the city broke into flames. The *Breslau*, called the *Midullu* by the Turks, bombarded Scotchby, a near-by port, about the same time. Several fires started in the latter city and there were some casualties at both points.

A second Russian hospital ship, the *Vperiode*, was torpedoed in the Black Sea, July 9, 1916, with a loss of seven lives. She was a ship of 850 tons, having accommodations for about 120 wounded. Like the *Portugal*, sunk by a submarine some weeks before the *Vperiode* was plainly marked with the usual Red Cross emblem. The attack came in daylight and was accepted by the Russians as having been deliberately made, which once more aroused the indignation of the Russian people.

Berlin announced July 7, 1916, that the British steamer *Les-tris*, outward bound from Liverpool had been captured near the British East Coast and taken to a German port. This second capture in the channel within a few days caused considerable criticism in England.

As dawn was breaking on July 10, 1916, a submarine came alongside a tug in Hampton Roads and asked for a pilot. The pilot went aboard and found himself on the subsea freighter *Deutschland*, first merchant submarine to be built and the first to make a voyage. She came from Bremerhaven, a distance of 4,000 miles, in sixteen days. Reports had been current since the *U-35* made her trip to Cartagena that the kaiser would send a message to President Wilson by an undersea boat. The American



public scouted the idea as being impossible of accomplishment, but the report persisted, and cities along the Atlantic Coast line had been on the watch for several days. The *Deutschland* eventually turned into Hampton Roads, piloted by a waiting tug, and tied up at a Baltimore dock.

The submarine, which was the largest ever seen in American waters, became a seven days' wonder. Captain Paul Koenig and his twenty-nine men and officers told some interesting stories of their trip across the ocean. It was said that the *Deutschland* could remain submerged for four days. When they got into the English Channel there was a cordon of warships barring exit to the Atlantic that made them extremely cautious. So Captain Koenig let his vessel lay on the bottom of the channel for a day and a night while the men enjoyed themselves with a phonograph and rousing German songs. When their enemies thinned out to some extent the submarine started again on her way and headed directly for Baltimore, which she reached without special incident.

The *Deutschland* immediately received the name of supersubmarine. Some thousand tons of dyes and other valuable products filled her hold. They were reported to be worth \$1,000,000. The vessel was able to make twelve knots an hour on the surface and about seven knots when submerged. She traveled most of the way across on the surface, being under water about one-third of the time. In addition to her valuable cargo, she brought a special message from Kaiser Wilhelm to the president.

No other submarine, so far as known, had made a trip of such distance as the *Deutschland* up to that time. Longer voyages have been accredited to several British submarines, but they were either made with a convoy or broken by stops enroute. Soon after the beginning of the war, several Australian submarines journeyed from their far-away home ports to the Dardanelles, traveling 13,000 miles. They called at various points in the two Americas. Submarines built in America and assembled in Canada proceeded from Newfoundland to Liverpool before the *Deutschland* crossed the Atlantic, but they had another ship as convoy.

The *Sultan Selim* and the *Midullu* clashed with Russian ships in the Black Sea, July 11, 1916, sinking four merchant vessels. They also bombarded harbor works on the Caucasian Coast near Puab. Both attacking vessels made their escape without injury.

Vienna reported on the same day the sinking of five British patrol boats in the Otranto Road, between Italy and Albania, by the cruiser *Novara*. Only nine men were saved.

Seaham Harbor, a small coal port near Sunderland, on the British Channel coast, was shelled by a submarine the night of July 11, 1916. Thirty rounds of shrapnel started several fires and caused the death of one woman. Berlin also claimed the sinking of a British auxiliary cruiser of 7,000 tons and three patrol vessels on the night of that day. The statement was never denied in London, and no details were made public as to the fate of the crews.

The Italian destroyer *Impetuoso* was torpedoed in the Adriatic, July 16, 1916, with a loss of 125 lives.

In retaliation for Turkish attacks upon her hospital ships, Russia announced July 21, 1916, that she would no longer respect hospital ships of the Ottomans. It was pointed out that hitherto all vessels bearing the markings of the Red Crescent Society, which is the Turkish equivalent of the Red Cross, had been uniformly respected. This declaration by Russia implied a depth of resentment that had swept through all of the allied countries because of deeds said to have been committed by the Teutons and their Turkish cohorts. Some few reprisals were taken by France in the way of air raids in retaliation for the bombardment of open cities. But this was the first recorded step of Russia in that direction and foretold a war in which all quarter would disappear.

Two years of fighting had cost both sides heavily upon the sea. Up to August 1, 1915, according to the best available figures, the allied navies lost seventy-one warships, with a tonnage of 326,855. Great Britain was a sufferer to the extent of forty-two ships in that first year, aggregating 254,494 tons, represented by eight battleships, three armored cruisers, four protected cruisers,

four light cruisers, and twenty-three smaller craft. In the same period France lost twelve ships of 28,027 tons; Russia six ships of 21,775 tons; Japan seven ships of 4,801, and Italy four ships of 17,758 tons.

The losses of Germany, Austria and Turkey in 1915 were placed at eighty-nine ships, with a gross tonnage of 262,791. Of these Germany lost sixty-nine vessels, aggregating 238,904 tons, and consisting of one battle cruiser, five armored cruisers, ten protected cruisers and fifty smaller craft. Austria lost seven ships of 7,397 tons, and Turkey thirteen ships of 16,490 tons.

Curiously enough the second year's figures show smaller losses for both sides. The Allies are accredited with forty-one ships having a tonnage of 202,600, and the Teutonic allies with thirty three ships, having a tonnage of 125,120. Thirty-four British ships were sunk, including two battleships, three battle cruisers, seven protected cruisers, two light cruisers, and seventeen smaller craft. The other losses were distributed between her partners in arms.

Germany's loss in 1916 was twenty-six ships—four battleships, one battle cruiser, six protected cruisers, and fifteen smaller craft, approximating 114,620 tons. The remaining casualties on the German side were divided between Austria and Turkey.

These figures do not take into account several vessels claimed to have been sunk by both sides but are predicated upon known sea casualties. During the two years Germany sustained a reduction of 18.5 of her strength in battleships and battle cruisers of the dreadnought era, which means ships built since 1904, and these are the units that really count in modern warfare. Britain is believed to have lost 6.6 of similar vessels. In light cruisers her loss was only 5.2 per cent, while Germany was weakened nearly 45 per cent in that class of vessel. The figures shift for vessels of an older type, showing a ratio of about two to one against Great Britain. This is due largely to the Dardanelles enterprise and because in some instances older craft were assigned to many dangerous undertakings where the newer ships were held in reserve.

In every engagement of any consequence that took place during the first two years of war, with the single exception of the fight off Chile, Britain won and Germany lost. But Germany inflicted greater injury upon her opponent than any other nation in all the years of Britain's maritime supremacy. The actual material loss to her enemies was larger than her own. Despite this and the fact of Germany's strongest efforts Britain still ruled the waves.



## PART II—CAMPAIGN ON THE EASTERN FRONT

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### CHAPTER VII

#### THE EASTERN FRONT AT THE APPROACH OF SPRING, 1916

IN the preceding volumes we have followed the fates of the Austrian, German, and Russian armies from the beginning of the war up to March 1, 1916. Although spring weather does not set in in any part of the country through which the eastern front ran until considerable time after that date, events along the western front, where the Germans were then hammering away at the gates of Verdun, had shaped themselves in such a manner that they were bound to influence the plans of the Russian General Staff. It was, therefore, not much of a surprise that a Russian offensive should set in previous to the actual arrival of spring.

As we shall see shortly, the first two weeks or so of March, 1916, saw a renewal of active fighting at many points along the entire eastern front. But most of this was restricted during this period to engagements between small bodies of troops and in most instances amounted to little more than clashes between patrols. This preliminary period of reconnoitering was followed by another short period of preparatory work on the part of the Russian armies consisting of artillery attacks on certain selected points and undertaken with a violence and an apparently unlimited supply of guns and ammunition such as had not been displayed by the Russian forces on any previous occasion, and when, after these preliminaries

the actual offensive was launched, the number of men employed was proportionally immense.

Before we follow in detail developments along the eastern front, it will be well for a fuller understanding of these, to visualize again its location and to determine once more the distribution of the forces maintaining it on both sides. In its location the eastern front had experienced very little change since the winter of 1915 had set in and ended active campaigning. Its northern end now rested on the southwest shore of the Gulf of Riga at a point about ten miles northwest of the Baltic town of Pukkum on the Riga-Windau railroad and about thirty miles northwest of Riga itself. From there it ran in a southeasterly direction through Schlock, crossed the river Aa where it touches Lake Babit, passed to the north of the village of Oley and only about five miles south of Riga, and reached the Dvina about halfway between Uxkull and Riga. From there it followed more or less closely the left bank of the Dvina, passed Friedrichstadt and Jacobstadt to a point just west of Kalkuhnen, a little town on the bend of the Dvina, opposite Dvinsk. There it continued, generally speaking, in a southerly direction, at some points with a slight twist to the east, at others with a similarly slight turn to the west. It thus passed just east of Lake Drisviaty, crossed the Disna River at Koziany, then ran through Postavy and just east of Lake Narotch, crossed the Viliya River and the Vilna-Minsk railroad at Smorgon, and reached the Niemen at Lubcha. From thence it passed by the towns of Korelitchy, Zirin, Luchowtchy and entered the Pripet Marshes at Lipsk. About ten miles south of the latter town the line crossed the Oginsky Canal and followed along its west bank through the town of Teletshany to about the point where the canal joins the Jasiolda River. From that point the Germans still maintained their salient that swings about five miles to the east of the city of Pinsk.

Up to just south of the Pinsk salient, where the line crossed the Pripet River, it was held, for the Central Powers, almost exclusively by German troops. Below that point its defense was almost entirely in the hands of Austro-Hungarian regiments.

Soon after crossing the Pripet River the line reached the Styr River and followed its many turns for some thirty miles, now on its western bank and then again on its eastern shore. This river was crossed between Czartorysk and Kolki. About thirty miles south of Kolki, just to the east of the village of Olyka the Russians had succeeded in maintaining a small salient, the apex of which was directed toward their lost fortress of Lutsk almost twenty miles to the west, while the southern side passed very close to that other fortress, Dubno, even though it ran still some distance to the east of it. Crossing then the Lemberg-Rovno railroad, the line ran along both banks of the Sokal River to Ikva and crossed the Galician border near Novo Alexinez.

A short distance south of the border, about twenty miles, it crossed the Lemberg-Tarnopol railroad, at Jesierne, a little town about sixty miles east of Lemberg and less than twenty miles west of Tarnopol. Ten miles further south the Strypa River was crossed and followed within a mile or so along its west bank for a distance of some twenty miles, passing west of Burkanow and Buczacz. Just south of the latter town the line overspread both banks of the Strypa up to its junction with the Dniester, thence along the banks of this stream for almost twenty miles to a point about ten miles west of the junction of the Sereth River with the Dniester. At that point the line took another slight turn to the east, passing just east of the city of Czernowitz, and crossing at that point the river Pruth into the Austrian province of Bukowina. Less than ten miles southeast of Czernovitz the border of Rumania was reached near Wama and thereby the end of the line.

As the crow flies, the length of this line, from the Gulf of Riga to the Rumanian border was six hundred and twenty miles. Actually, counting its many turns and twists and salients, it covered more than seven hundred and fifty miles. From the Gulf to the Pripet River the eastern front was held by German troops with one single exception.

From there an Austrian army corps with only a very slight admixture of German troops completed the front of the Central Empires down to the Bessarabian border.



EASTERN BATTLE FRONT, AUGUST, 1916



From the Gulf of Riga down to the Oginski Canal five distinct German army corps were facing the Russians. The most northern of these covered the Gulf section and the Dvina front down to a point near Friedrichstadt. The second group was lined up from that point on down to somewhere just south of Lake Drisviaty, the third from Lake Drisviaty to the Viliya River, the fourth from the Viliya River to the Niemen River, and the fifth from the Niemen to the Oginski Canal. Generals von Scholz, von Eichhorn, von Fabeck, and von Woysch, were in command of these difficult units, with Field Marshal von Hindenburg in supreme command. The sector south of the Oginski Canal and up to the Pripet River was held by another army group under the command of Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria.

The first Austrian army corps, forming the left wing of the front held by the Austro-Hungarian forces, was commanded by Archduke Joseph Ferdinand. Later on, as the rapid success of the Russian offensive made it necessary for German troops to come to the assistance of their sorely pressed allies, General von Linsingen was dispatched from the north with reinforcements and assumed supreme command of this group of armies located in Volhynia. The command of the Galician front was in the hands of the Bavarian general, Count von Bothmer, while the forces fighting in the Bukowina were directed by General Pflanzer.

On the Russian side of the line General Kuropatkin, well known from the Russo-Japanese War, was in command of the northern half of the front. Of course, there were a number of other generals under him in charge of the various sectors of this long line. But on account of the comparative inactivity which was maintained most of the time along this line, their names did not figure largely. South of the Pripet Marshes General Alexeieff was in supreme command. Under him were General Brussilov and General Kaledin in Volhynia, General Sakharoff in Galicia, and the Cossack General Lechitsky in the Bukowina along the Dniester. Here, too, of course were a number of other commanders who, however, came into prominence only occasionally.

An intimate view of some of the Russian generals and their troops is presented in the following description from the pen of the official English press representative:

"The head of the higher command, General Alexeieff, early in the Galician campaign clearly proved, as chief of staff to General Ivanoff, his extraordinary capacity to direct an advance. As commander on the Warsaw front he made it evident that he could, with an army short of all material things, hold until the last moment an enemy equipped with everything, and then escape the enemy's clutches. At Vilna he showed his technique by again eluding the enemy.

"General Kaledin, the commander of the army on the Kovel front, is relatively a new figure in important operations. At the beginning of the war, as commander of a cavalry division, his universal competence in all operations committed to his care brought him rapid promotion, until now he is the head of this huge army. Meeting him frequently as a guest, I have come to feel great confidence in this resolute, quiet man, who is surrounded by a sober, serious staff, each officer picked for his past performance.

"I note an infinite improvement since last year in the army. In the first place I see no troops without rifles, and there is no shortage of ammunition apparent. Then there is an extraordinary improvement in the organization of the transport. In spite of the large volume of troops on this front they are moving with less confusion than the transport of single corps entailed two years ago. The compact organization of munition columns, and the absence of wasted time have speeded up communications fully fifty per cent, enabling three units to be moved as easily as two last year.

"The transport has been further improved by the addition of motor vehicles. The staff organization is incomparably better than at the beginning of the war, and I have not seen a single staff on this front which is not entirely competent. The system of transporting the wounded has been well organized, and vast numbers are being cleared from the front stations without confusion or congestion.

"In comparison I can recall the early Galician days when unimagined numbers of wounded, both our own and Austrian, flooded Lemberg in a few days, and there were countless casualties. In spite of the numbers of wounded here I have not seen any congestion, and I find all the clearing stations cleared within a few hours after every fight, the wounded passing to base hospitals and being evacuated into the interior of Russia with great promptness.

"Owing to the few good roads and the distance from the railway of much of the fighting, in many places the wounded have been obliged to make trips of two or three days in peasants' carts before reaching the railways.

"Finally, the morale of the army has reached an unexampled pitch. In the hospitals which I inspected with the general many of the wounded, even those near death, called for news of the front, asking if the trenches were taken, and saying they were willing to die if the Germans were only beaten. Such sentiments typify the extent to which this conflict is now rooted in the hearts of the Russian army and people."

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RUSSIAN MARCH—OFFENSIVE FROM RIGA TO PINSK

**B**EGINNING with March 1, 1916, active campaigning was renewed along the eastern front. Climatic conditions, of course, made any extensive movements impossible as yet. But from here and there reports came of local attacks, of more frequent clashes between patrols, and of renewed artillery activity. Some of these occurred in the Bukowina, in Bessarabia, and in Galicia, others in the neighborhood of Baranovitchy, north of the Pripet Marshes, and, later, toward the middle of March, 1916, fighting took place at the northernmost point of the line, near Lake Babit.

It was not until March 17, 1916, however, that it became more apparent what was the purpose of the many encounters between Russian and German patrols that had been officially reported with considerable regularity since the beginning of March. On March 17, 1916, both the German and Austro-Hungarian official statements reported increased Russian artillery fire all along the line. On the following day, March 18, 1916, the Russians started a series of violent attacks. The first of these was launched in the sector south of Dvinsk. This is the region covered with a number of small marshy lakes that had seen a great deal of the most desperate fighting in 1915. With great violence Russian infantry was thrown against the German lines that ran from Lake Drisviaty south to the town of Postavy; another attack of equal strength developed still further south along both banks of Lake Narotch. But the German lines not only held, but threw back the attacking forces with heavy losses which, according to the German official statement of that day were claimed to have numbered at Lake Narotch alone more than 9,000 in dead.

In spite of these heavy losses and of the determined German resistance, the Russians repeated the attack with even increased force on March 19, 1916. At Lake Drisviaty, in the neighborhood of Postavy and between Lake Vishnieff and Lake Narotch attack after attack was launched with the greatest abandon. This time the Germans not only repulsed all these attacks, but promptly launched a counterattack near Vidzy, a little country town on the Vilna-Dvinsk post road, capturing thereby some 300 men. The German official statement claimed that these prisoners belonged to seven different Russian regiments, giving thereby an indication of the comparatively large masses of troops employed on the Russian side.

Again on March 30, 1916, new attacks were launched in the same locality. At one point the Germans were forced to withdraw a narrow salient which protruded to a considerable distance just south of Lake Narotch. Russian machine guns had been placed in such positions that they enfiladed the salient in three directions and made it untenable. The German line here was withdrawn a few hundred feet toward the heights of Blisuiiki.



During the night of March 20, 1916, especially violent attacks were again launched against the German lines between Postavy and Vileity, a small village to the northwest of that town. There the Russians succeeded in gaining a foothold in the German trenches. During the afternoon the Russians attempted to extend this success. With renewed violence they trained their guns on the German positions. In order to throw back a strong German counterattack, a curtain of fire was laid before the trenches stormed earlier in the day. At the same time German artillery strongly supported the attack of their infantry. On both sides the gunfire became so violent that single shots could not be distinguished any longer. Shrapnel exploded without cessation and rifle fire became so rapid that it sounded hardly less loudly than the gunfire. Late in the afternoon the Germans succeeded in retaking the trenches which they had lost in the morning, capturing at that time the Russian victors of the morning to the number of 600.

On the same day, March 21, 1916, the Russians extended the sphere of their attack. At the same time that they were hammering away at the German lines south of Dvinsk other attacks were launched all along the northern front. In the Riga region, near the village of Plakanen, as well as in the district south of Dahlen Island, heavy engagements were fought. Farther south, between Friedrichstadt and Jacobstadt, on the south bank of the Dvina River the Russians captured a village and wood east of Augustinhof.

At many other points, along the entire eastern front from Lake Narotch south attacks developed. In most of these the Russians assumed the initiative. But here and there—near Tverietch, just south of Vidzy; along Lake Miadziol, just north of Lake Narotch, and around Lake Narotch itself—the Germans attempted a series of counterattacks which, however, yielded no tangible results. All in all, the day's fighting made little change in the respective positions and the losses in men were about evenly divided.

The violence and energy with which the Russian attacks during March were executed may readily be seen from reports of special correspondents, who were behind the German lines at that pe-

riod. Their collective testimony also tends to confirm the German claims that very large Russian forces were used and that their losses were immense.

"From Riga to the Rumanian border," says one of these eye-witnesses, "thundered the crashing of guns. . . . About seventy miles northeast of Mitau, a chain of lakes runs through the wooded, swampy country, narrow, long bodies of water follow the course of Mjadsjolke River, a natural trench in a region that is otherwise a very difficult territory by nature. In the south the chain is closed by Lake Narotch, a large secluded body of water of some thirty-five square miles, through which now runs the front. In the north of this chain of lakes, near the village of Postavy, a thundering of guns commenced on the morning of March 18, 1916, such as the eastern front had hardly ever heard before. Russian drum fire! From out of the woods, across the ice and snow water of the swamps, line after line came storming against the German trenches. . . . On the same day, farther south, between Lakes Narotch and Vishnieff another Russian attack was launched. . . . The losses of the Russians are immense. More than 5,000 dead and wounded must be lying before our positions only about ten miles wide. During the night a lull came. But with the break of dawn the drum fire broke out once more, and again the waves of infantry rolled up against our positions. . . . During the night from March 19 to March 20, 1916, the drum fire of the Russian guns increased to veritable fury. As if the entire supply of ammunition collected throughout the winter months were to be used up all at once, shells continuously shrieked and howled through the darkness: 50,000 hits were counted in one single sector. . . ."

Another correspondent writes: "The numbers of the Russians are immense. They have about sixty infantry divisions ready. Their losses are in proportion and were estimated on a front of about ninety miles to have been near to 80,000 men. For instance, against one German cavalry brigade there were thrown seven regiments with a very narrow front, but eight lines deep. Four times they came rushing on against the German barbed-wire obstacles without being able to break through, but losing

some 3,000 men just the same. . . . On March 24, 1916, 6,000 Russian shells were counted in a small sector on the Dvinsk front."

In the latter sector and to the north of it, heavy fighting had developed on March 22 and 23, 1916. Especially around Jacobstadt, attack followed attack, both sides taking turns in assuming the offensive. The Russian attacks were particularly violent during the evening and night of March 22, 1916, and in some places resulted in the temporary invasion of the German first-line trenches. Especially hard was fighting along the Jacobstadt-Mitau railroad. Between Dvinsk and Lake Drisviaty a violent artillery and rifle duel was kept up almost continuously, resulting at one point, just below Dvinsk near Shishkovo, in the breaking up of a German attack. South of the lake, at the village of Mintsiouny, however, a German attack succeeded and drove the Russians out of some trenches which they had gained only the day before. Here, too, both artillery and rifle fire of great violence carried death into both the Russian and German ranks. At Vidzy, a few miles farther south, the Russians stormed four times in quick succession against the German positions. Northwest of Postavy another Russian attack failed, the Germans capturing over 900 men and officers at that particular point. On the other hand, a German attack still farther south and northwest of Lake Narotch was repulsed and the Russians made slight gains in the face of a most violent fire. Near the south shore of Lake Narotch a German attack supported by asphyxiating gas forced back the Russians on a very narrow front for a very short distance. From Lake Narotch down to the Pripet Marshes the Russians maintained a lively cannonade at many points without, however, making any attacks in force.

During March 23, 1916, a determined Russian attack against the bridgehead at Jacobstadt broke down under the heavy German gunfire. During the night repeated Russian attacks to the north of the Jacobstadt-Mitau railroad a surprise attack southwest of Dvinsk and violent attacks along the Dvinsk-Vidzy sector suffered the same fate, although in some instances the Russian troops succeeded in coming right up to the German

barbed-wire obstacles. Between Lake Narotch and Lake Vishnieff the Russians captured some woods after driving out German forces which had constructed strong positions there.

Without cessation the Russian attacks continued day by day. Fresh troops were brought up continuously. The munition supply, which in the past had been one of the chief causes of Russian failure and disaster, seemed to have become suddenly inexhaustible. Not only was each attack carefully and extensively prepared by the most violent kind of artillery fire, but the latter was directed also against those German positions which at that time were immune from attack on account of the insurmountable natural difficulties brought about by climatic conditions. For by this time winter began to break up and ice and snow commenced to melt, signifying the rapid approach of the spring floods. To a certain extent these climatic conditions undoubtedly had an important influence on Russian plans. Almost along the entire northern part of the front the Germans possessed one great advantage. Their positions were located on higher and drier ground than those of the Russians, whose trenches were on low ground, and would become next to untenable, once thaw and spring floods would set in in earnest. There is little doubt that the great energy and superb disregard of human life which the Russian commanders developed throughout the March offensive were principally the result of their strong desire to get their forces on better ground before it was too late or too difficult, and from a tactical point of view the risks which they took at that time and the price which they seemed to be willing to pay to achieve their ends were not any too great.

In spite of the lack of any important success the Russian attacks against the Jacobstadt sector were renewed on March 24, 1916. But the German guns had shot themselves in so well that it availed nothing. Other attacks, attempted to the southwest of Dvinsk and at various points north of Vidzy suffered the same fate. In the neighborhood of Lake Narotch Russian activities on that day were restricted to artillery fire.

The Germans assumed the offensive on March 25, 1916, on the Riga-Dvinsk sector. Their guns were trained against Schlock, a



small town on the south shore of the Gulf of Riga, just northwest of Lake Babit, against the bridgehead at Uxkull, fifteen miles southeast of Riga on the Dvina, and against a number of other positions between that point and Jacobstadt. A German attempt to gain ground north of the small sector of the Mitau-Jacobstadt railway, that was still in Russian hands, failed in the face of a devastating Russian cannonade. A German trench was captured by Russian infantry ably supported by artillery west of Dvinsk, but neither southwest nor south of this fortress were the Russians able to register any success. Northwest of Postavy and between Lake Narotch and Lake Vishnieff heavy fighting still continued and in some places developed into hand-to-hand fighting between smaller detachments. From Lake Narotch down to the Pripet Marshes German and Russian guns again raked the trenches facing them.

On March 26, 1916, the following day, the Russians attacked at many points. Northwest of Jacobstadt, near the village of Augustinhof, a most violent attack brought no results. Northwest of Postavy the Russians stormed two trenches. Southwest of Lake Narotch repeated heavy attacks were repulsed and some West Prussian regiments recovered an important observation point which they had lost a week before. Over 2,100 officers and men were captured that day by the Germans. Aeroplanes of the latter also resumed activity and dropped bombs on the stations at Dvinsk, and Vileika, as well as along the Baranovitchy-Minsk railroad.

Russian artillery carried death and destruction into the German trenches on March 27, 1916, before Oley, south of Riga, and before the Uxkull bridgehead. In the Jacobstadt sector, as well as near Postavy, violent engagements, launched now by the Germans and then again by the Russians, occurred all day long without yielding any results to either side. Southwest of Lake Narotch the Russians made a determined attack with two divisions against the positions captured by German regiments on the previous day, but were not able to dislodge the latter. Fighting also developed now in the Pripet Marshes and the territory immediately adjoining. Weather conditions were rapidly chang-

ing for the worse all along the eastern front. Thaw set in, and all marsh and lake ground was flooded. Everywhere, not only in the southern region, but also in the northern, the ice on the rivers and lakes became covered with water and was getting soft near the banks. Throughout the northern region the melting of the thickly lying snow in the roads was making the movements of troops and artillery extraordinarily difficult.

As a result of these conditions, which were growing more difficult every day, a decided decrease in activity became immediately noticeable on both sides. For quite a time fighting, of course, continued at various points. But both the numbers of men employed as well as the intensity of their effort steadily increased.

Before Dvinsk and just south of the fortress artillery fire formed the chief event on March 28, 1916. But south of Lake Narotch the Russians still kept up their attacks. At one point, where the Germans had gained a wood a few days ago the Russian forces attacked seven times in quick succession and thereby recovered the southern part of the forest. Along the Oginski Canal fighting was conducted at long range. German aeroplanes again dropped bombs; this time on the stations at Molodetchna on the Minsk-Vilna railroad, as well as at Politzy and Luniniets.

Both March 30 and 31, 1916, were marked by a noticeable cessation of attacks on either side. Long-range rifle fire and artillery cannonades, however, took place at many points from the Gulf down to the Pripet Marshes. German aeroplanes again attacked a number of stations on railroads leading out of Minsk to western points.

Of all the violent fighting which took place during the second half of March, 1916, along the northern half of the eastern front, the little village of Postavy, perhaps, saw more than any other point. The special correspondent of a Chicago newspaper witnessed a great deal of this remarkably desperate struggle during his stay with Field Marshal von Hindenburg's troops. His vivid description, which follows, will give a good idea of the valor displayed both by German and Russian troops, as well as of the

immense losses incurred by the attackers during this series of battles lasting ten days.

"Despite the artillery, despite the machine guns and despite the infantry fire, the apparently inexhaustible regiments of Russians swept on over the dead, over the barbed-wire barriers before the German line, over the first trenches and routed the German soldiers, who were half frozen in the mud of their shattered shelters. A terrible hand-to-hand conflict followed. Hand grenades tore down scores of defenders and assailants' attacks. The men fought like maniacs with spades, bayonets, knives and clubbed guns.

"But the Russians won at a fearful price for so slight a gain. They stopped within a hundred feet of victory. It may have been lack of discipline, lack of officers or lack of reserves; no one knows.

"The Russians seemed helpless in the German trenches. Instead of sweeping on to the second lines they tried to intrench themselves in the wrecked German first line. Immediately German artillery hurled shells of the heaviest caliber into those lines and tore them into fragments.

"Then came the reserves and by nightfall the Russians had again been driven out.

"Four days later, suddenly without warning, a mud-colored wave began to pour forth from the forest. It was a line of Russians three ranks deep containing more than 1,000 men. Behind this was a second wave like the first, and then a third.

"The German artillery tore holes in the ranks, which merely closed up again, marched on, and made no attempt to fire. They marched as though on parade. 'It was magnificent but criminal!' said a German officer.

"When a fourth line emerged from the woods the German artillery dropped a curtain of fire behind it, and then a similar wall of shells ahead of those in front. They then moved these two walls closer together with a hail of shrapnel between them, while at the same time they cut loose with the machine guns.

"The splendid formation of Russians, trapped between the walls of fire, scattered heedlessly in vain. Shells gouged deep

holes in the dissolving ranks. The air was filled with clamor and frantic shrieks were sometimes heard above the incessant roar and cracking of exploding projectiles.

"Defeated men sought to dig themselves into the ground in the foolish belief that they could find safety there from this deluge of shells. Others raced madly for the rear and some escaped in this way as if by a miracle. Still others ran toward the German lines only to be cut down by the German machine-gun fire.

"In less than twenty minutes the terrible dream was over. The attack had cost the Russians 4,000 lives, and yet not a Russian soldier had come within 600 yards of the German line."

Another important feature of the March offensive, especially in its early phases, was the patrol work, executed on both sides. This required not only courage of the highest order, but also a high degree of intelligence on the part of the leader as well as of the men working under him. The results obtained by patrol work are, of course, of the greatest importance to the respective commanding officers, and many times the way in which such a mission is carried out is the decisive factor in bringing success or failure to an important movement. At the same time patrol work is, of course, a matter of chiefly local importance, and no matter how difficult the problem or how cleverly it is solved it is only on rare occasions that the result reaches the outside world, even though a collection of detailed reports which patrol leaders are able to make would form a story that would put to shadow the most impossible book of fiction or the most unbelievable adventure film.

The following two descriptions of such work, therefore, make not only a highly sensational story, but prove also that war in modern times relies almost as much on personal valor and initiative as in times gone by, all claims to the contrary notwithstanding, and in spite of the wonderful technical progress which military science of our times shares with all other sciences.

An American special newspaper correspondent with Von Hindenburg's army reports the following occurrences and also gives a vivid pen picture of conditions in the territory immediately behind the front:



"In a forest near the town of Lyntupy a patrol of thirteen Russian spies hid in an abandoned German dugout in the course of a night march southward to destroy a bridge over the river Viliya with high explosives.

"Desperate for food, they finally intrusted their safety to a Polish forester, ordering him to bring food. The forester promptly gave the Germans information. The Germans surrounded the dugout, throwing in three hand grenades. On entering the dugout they discovered ten Russians killed by grenades and three by bullets.

"The Russian lieutenant had shot two comrades not killed by grenades and then himself, in order to escape execution as spies, for the patrol was not in uniform.

"Another audacity was performed during a Russian attack on the German trenches. From the darkness came a voice calling in perfect German, 'What is the matter with you? Are you soldiers? Are you Germans? Are you men? Why don't you get forward and attack the Russians? Are you afraid?'

"Bewildered by these words coming up to them direct from the nearest wire entanglements, the Germans turned a searchlight in the direction, discovering the speaker to be a Russian officer who had taken his life in his hands on the chance of drawing the Germans from the trenches. His audacity cost him his life, for instantly he fell before a volley of bullets.

"The Germans speak well of the marksmanship of considerable bodies of the Russian infantry. Personally, I can say they shoot as well as I have any desire to have men shoot when aiming at me. Twice on Friday I was sent scurrying off exposed ridges by the waspish whisper of bullets coming from a Russian position jutting from the south shore of Lake Miadziol.

"There is not only railroad building, but also much farming going on around Karolinow. The land for a distance of thirty miles has been divided into thirteen farm districts by the Germans and planted to potatoes, rye, oats and summer barley. In many parts the Germans are taking a census, all their methodicalness contributing vastly to the troops' comfort and happiness. Their health is amazing. The records of one division show five

sick men daily, which is not as many as one would find in any town of 20,000 in any part of the world.

"German caution and inventiveness also keep down the casualties marvelously. Records I saw to-day showed thirty-eight wounded in one division in the month of March, though the division was attacked twice during the offensive. The percentage of heavily wounded for all the German troops in this region in the last three months averages seven.

"Despite the horrible roads, Field Marshal von Hindenburg has penetrated to numerous villages on the front in the last few days to greet and thank the troops. Returning to his headquarters Von Hindenburg attended a banquet given by princes, nobles and generals of the empire to mark the fiftieth year of the field marshal's army service. Present amid the notables was a private soldier, in civil life a blacksmith, who was elected with two officers by their comrades to represent Von Hindenburg's old regiment at the banquet. The private was chosen because he had been in all the battles, but never had been wounded and never sick. He wears the Iron Cross of both classes."

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## CHAPTER IX

### RESUMPTION OF AUSTRO-RUSSIAN OPERATIONS

JUST as was the case along the Russo-German line, considerable local fighting took place during the early part of March, to the south, along the Austro-Russian front. Here, too, much of it was between scouting parties and advanced outposts who attempted to feel out each other's strength. Occasionally one or the other side would launch an attack, with small forces, which, however, had little influence on general conditions, even though the fighting always was furious and violent.

On March 4, 1916, a detachment of Russian scouts belonging to General Ivanoff's army captured and occupied an advanced

Austrian trench, close to the bridgehead of Michaleze, to the northeast of the town of Uscieszko on the Dniester River. Austrian forces immediately attempted to regain this position, launching three separate attacks against it. But the Russian troops held on to their slight gain. Near by, in the neighborhood of Zamnshin on the Dniester, Russian engineers had constructed elaborate mining works which were exploded on the same day, doing considerable damage to the Austrian defense works, and enabling the Russian forces to occupy some advanced Austrian trenches.

During the next two weeks considerable fighting of this nature occurred at many points along the front from the Pripet Marshes down to the Dniester. At no time, however, were the forces engaged on either side very numerous, nor did the results change the front materially. The various engagements coming so early in the year, quite some time before spring could be expected, signified, however, that there were more important undertakings in the air. The fact that the Russians were especially active in these scouting expeditions—for they really amounted to little more at that time—rather pointed toward an early resumption of the offensive on their part.

It was, therefore, not at all surprising that, before long, a considerable increase in Russian artillery activity became noticeable. About the middle of March, coincident with a similar increase of artillery attacks along the German-Russian front, the Russian guns in South Poland, Galicia, and the Bukowina began to thunder again as they had not done since the fall of 1915. This was especially done along the Dniester River and the Besarabian front.

During the night of March 17, 1916, the Austrian position near Uscieszko, which had been attacked before in the early part of March, again was subjected to extensive attacks by means of mines and to a considerable amount of shelling. This was a strongly fortified position, guarding a bridgehead on the Dniester, which had been held by the Austrians ever since October, 1915. The mining operations were so successfully planned and executed that the Austrians were forced to with-

draw a short distance, when the Russians followed the explosion of their mines with a determined attack with hand grenades. In spite of this, however, the Austrians held the major part of this position until March 19, 1916.

How furious the fighting was on both sides is indicated in the official Austrian statement announcing on March 20, 1916, the final withdrawal from this position:

"Yesterday evening, after six months of brave defense, the destroyed bridge and fortifications to the northwest of Uscieszko (on the Dniester) were evacuated. Although the Russians succeeded in the morning in exploding a breach 330 yards in width, the garrison, which was attacked by an eightfold superior force, despite all losses held out for seven hours in a most violent gun and infantry fire.

"Only at 5 o'clock in the afternoon the commandant, Colonel Planckh, determined to evacuate the destroyed fortifications. Smaller detachments and the wounded reached the south bank of the Dniester by means of boats. Soon, however, this means of transport had to be given up, owing to the concentrated fire of the enemy.

"There remained for our brave troops, composed of the Kaiser Dragoons and sappers, only one outlet if they were to evade capture. They had to cut their way through Uscieszko, which was strongly occupied by the enemy, to our troops ensconced on the heights north of Zaleszczyki. The march through the enemy position succeeded. Under cover of night Colonel Planckh led his heroic men toward our advanced posts northwest of Zaleszczyki, where he arrived early this morning."

During the next few days the fire from the Russian batteries increased still more in violence. It did not, however, at any time or place assume the same strength which it had reached by that time at many points along the Russo-German front, north of the Pripet Marshes. Nor, indeed, did the Russians duplicate in the south their attempt at a determined offensive which they were making then in the north.

Considering the relative importance of Russian activities during the month of March, 1916, most of the engagements



which took place in Galicia and Volhynia must be classed as unimportant. On March 21, 1916, it is true, almost the entire Austrian front was subjected to extensive artillery fire. But only at a few points was this followed by infantry attacks, and these were executed with small detachments only. Along the Strypa River Russian forces attempted to advance at various points, without gaining any ground.

Throughout the following days many engagements between individual outposts were again reported. On March 27, 1916, a Russian attempt to capture Austrian positions near Bojan, after destroying some of the fortifications by mines, failed. A similar fate met the attempt made during that night to cross the Strypa River at its junction with the Dniester. Other parts of the front, especially near Olyka and along the Bessarabian border, were again subjected to heavy artillery fire.

Although, generally speaking, the Austrians restricted themselves in most instances to a determined resistance against all Russian attacks, they took the offensive in some places, without, however, making any more headway than their adversaries. By the end of March, 1916, aeroplanes became more active on this part of the front, just as they did further north. On March 28, 1916, both sides report more or less successful bombing expeditions, which on that day seemed to bring better results to the Austrians than to the Russians, though these operations, too, must be considered of minor importance. Increasingly bad weather now began to hamper further undertakings, just as it did in the north, and by March 31, 1916, the Russian activities seemed to have lost most of their energy. Along the entire southeastern front thaw set in and the snows were melting. Although the territory along the Austro-Russian front, south of the Pripet Marshes, is not as difficult as further north, not being equally swampy, the fact that the line ran to a great extent along rivers and through a mountainous, or at least hilly country, resulted in difficulties hardly less serious. Rivers and creeks which only a few weeks before held little water suddenly became torrents and caused a great deal of additional suffering to the troops on both sides by invading their trenches.

The Russian offensive had barely slowed down when the Austrians themselves promptly assumed offensive operations. But here, too, it must be borne in mind that, although we used the word offensive, operations were altogether on a minor scale and restricted to local engagements. Some of the heaviest fighting of this period occurred near the town of Olyka, on the Rovno-Brest-Litovsk railroad. Just south of this place repeated Austrian attacks were launched against a height held by the Russians, both on April 1 and 2, 1916, but they were promptly repulsed.

On April 3, 1916, another attack in that neighborhood, this time northeast of Olyka, near the villages of Bagnslavka and Bashlyki, also failed to carry the Austrians into the Russian trenches. On the same day Austrian attacks were reported northwest of Kremenets on the Ikva, along the Lemberg-Tarnopol railway and in the vicinity of Bojan. Against all of these the Russian troops successfully maintained their positions. Austrian aeroplanes continued their bombing expeditions against some of the more important places immediately to the rear of the Russian front, without, however, inflicting any very important damage.

Again a comparative lull set in. Of course, artillery duels as well as continuous fighting between scouting parties and outposts took place even during that period. But attacks in force were rare, and then restricted to local points only. The latter were made chiefly by the Austrians, but did not lead to anything of importance. The official Russian statements report such engagements on April 6, 1916, near Lake Sosno, south of Pinsk, along the upper Strypa in Galicia, and north of Bojan. On April 7, 1916, an Austrian offensive attack attempted with considerable force on the middle Strypa, east of Podgacie, in Galicia, did not even reach the first line of the Russian trenches. On April 9, 1916, the Russians captured some Austrian trenches in the region of the lower Strypa, and on April 11, 1916, repulsed Austrian attacks north and south of the railway station of Olyka. Once more comparative quiet set in along the southern part of the eastern front, broken only by engagements

between outposts and by a considerable increase in aeroplane activity.

But on April 13, 1916, the Russians again began to hammer away against the Austrian lines. A violent artillery attack was launched against the Austrian positions on the lower Strypa, on the Dniester and to the northwest of Czernowitz, and the Austrians were forced to withdraw some of their advanced positions to their main position northeast of Jaslovietz. Southeast of Buczacz an Austrian counterattack failed. A height at the mouth of the Strypa, called Tomb of Popoff, fell into the hands of the Russian troops. Both Austrian and Russian aeroplanes dropped bombs, without however inflicting any serious damage, even though the Russians officially announced that as many as fifty bombs fell on Zuczka—about half a mile outside of Czernowitz—and on North Czernowitz.

On April 14, 1916, the Russian artillery attacks on the lower Strypa, along the Dniester and near Czernowitz, were repeated. Again the Russians launched attacks against the advanced Austrian trenches at the mouth of the Strypa and southeast of Buczacz. An advanced Russian position on the road between that town and Czortkov was occupied by the Austrians.

For the balance of April, 1916, comparative quiet again ruled along the southeastern front. The muddy condition of the roads made extensive movements practically impossible. Outposts engagements, artillery duels, aeroplane bombardments, isolated attacks on advanced trenches and field works, of course, continued right along. But both success and failure were only of local importance, so that the official reports in most cases did not even mention the location of these engagements.

On the last day of April, 1916, however, the army of Arch-Duke Joseph Ferdinand started a new strong offensive movement north of Mouravitzky on the Ikva in Volhynia. Heavy and light artillery prepared the way for an attack in considerable force against Russian trenches which formed a salient at that point, west of the villages of Little and Great Boyarka. The Russians had to give ground, but soon afterward started a strong counterattack, supported by heavy artillery fire, and

regained the lost ground, capturing some 600 officers and men. In the southern half of the eastern front, just as in the northern half, there was little change in the character of fighting with the coming of May and the improvement in the weather. Artillery duels, aeroplane attacks, scouting expeditions, and local infantry attacks of limited extent and strength were daily occurrences.

On May 1, 1916, Austro-Hungarian detachments were forced to withdraw from their advanced positions to the north of the village of Mlynów. This place is located on the Ikva River, some ten miles northwest of the fortress of Dubno. Here the Russians had made a slight gain on April 28, 1916, and when they made an attack with superior forces from their newly fortified positions, they were able to drive back the Austro-Hungarians still a little bit farther.

Twenty miles farther north, in the vicinity of Olyka, the little town about halfway between the fortress of Lutsk and Rovno, on the railway line connecting these two points, the Russian forces reported slight progress on May 2, 1916. Northwest of Kremenets, in the Ikva section, Austro-Hungarian engineers succeeded in exploding mines in front of the Russian trenches. But the Russians themselves promptly utilized this accomplishment by rushing out of their trenches and making an advanced trench of their own out of the mine craters dug for them by their enemies.

Two days later, on May 4, 1916, the Russians were able to improve still more their new positions southeast of Olyka station, and to gain some more ground there. Repeated Austro-Hungarian counterattacks were repulsed. The same fate was suffered by determined infantry attacks on the Russian trenches in the region of the Tarnopol-Pezerna railway, in spite of the fact that these attacks were made in considerable force and were supported by strong artillery and rifle fire. Later the same day an engagement between reconnoitering detachments in the same region, southwest of Tarnopol, resulted in the capture of one Russian officer and 100 men by their Austro-Hungarian opponents.



Minor engagements between scouting parties and outposts were the rule of the day on May 5, 1916. These were especially frequent in the region of Tzartorysk on the Styr, just south of the Kovel-Kieff railway and south of Olyka station where Austro-Hungarian troops were forced to evacuate the woods east of the village of Jeruistche. A slight gain was made on May 6, 1916, by Russian troops in Galicia, on the lower Strypa River, north of the village of Jaslovietz.

Extensive mining operations, which, of course, were carried on at all times at many places, culminated successfully for the Russians in the region northwest of Kremenets on the Ikva and south of Zboroff on the Tarnopol-Lemberg railway. In the latter place Russian troops crept through a mine crater toward a point where Austro-Hungarian engineering troops were preparing additional mines and dispersed the working parties by a shower of hand grenades.

Throughout the balance of May operations along the southern part of the eastern front consisted of continued artillery duels, of frequent aeroplane attacks, and of a series of unimportant though bitterly contested minor engagements at many points, most of which had no relation to each other, and were either attacks on enemy trenches or attempts at repulsing such attacks. Equally continuous, of course, also were scouting expeditions and mining operations. None of these operations, however, yielded any noticeable results for either side, and the story of one is practically the story of all. The result of the artillery duels frequently was the destruction of some advanced trenches, while occasionally a munitions or supply transport was caught, or an exposed battery silenced. Mining operations sometimes would also lead to the destruction of isolated trenches, and thus change slightly the location of the line. But what one side gained on a given day was often lost again the next day, and the net result left both Germans and Russians at the end of May practically where they had been at the beginning. Most of these minor engagements occurred in regions that had seen a great deal of fighting before. Again and again there appear in the official reports such well-known names as Tzartorysk,

Kolki, Olyka, Kremenets, Novo Alecinez, Styr River, Ikva River, Strypa River. Inch by inch almost this ground, long ago drenched with the blood of brave men, was fought over and over again—and a gain of a few hundred feet was considered, indeed, a gain.

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## CHAPTER X

### THAW AND SPRING FLOODS

WITH the coming of thaw and the resulting spring floods roads along the eastern front, not any too good under the most favorable climatic conditions, had become little else than rivers of mud. Many of them, it is true, had been considerably improved during the long winter months, especially on the German-Austrian side of the line. But in many instances this improvement consisted simply of covering them with planks in order to make it possible to move transports without having wheels sink into the mud up to the axles. When the creeks and rivers along the line were now suddenly transformed by the melting snows into streams and torrents, much of this improvement was carried away and many roads not only sank back into their former impossible state, but, becoming thoroughly soaked and saturated with water in many places became impassable even for infantry. Movements of large masses soon were out of the question. To shift artillery, especially of the heavier kind, as quickly as an offensive movement required, and to keep both guns and men sufficiently supplied with munitions, were out of the question. The natural result, therefore, of these conditions was the prompt cessation of the Russian offensive which had been started in March, 1916, just before the breaking up of a severe winter.

However, this did not mean everywhere a return to the trench warfare, such as had been carried on all winter, although in many parts of the front activities on both sides amounted to little more. At other points, however, offensive movements were kept up,

even if they were restricted in extent and force. Throughout the months of April and May, 1916, no important changes took place anywhere on the eastern front. A great deal of the fighting, almost all, indeed, was the result of clashes between scouting detachments or else simply a struggle for the possession of the most advantageous points, involving in most instances only a trench here or another trench there, and always comparatively small numbers of soldiers.

Though the story of this series of minor engagements as it can be constructed from official reports and other sources offers few thrills and is lacking entirely in the sensational accomplishments which mark movements of greater extent and importance, this is due chiefly to the fact that few details become known about fighting of only local character. In spite of this it must be borne in mind that all of this fighting was of the most determined kind, was done under conditions requiring the greatest amount of endurance and courage, and resulted in innumerable individual heroic deeds, which, just because they were individual, almost always remained unknown to the outside world.

On April 1, 1916, a German attack against the bridgehead at Uxkull was repulsed by Russian artillery. Farther south, in the Dvinsk sector German positions were subjected to strong artillery bombardment at many points, especially at Mechkele, and just north of Vidzy. On the following day, April 2, 1916, fighting again took place in the Uxkull region. Mines were exploded near Novo Selki, south of Krevo, a town just south of the Viliya River. The Germans launched an attack north of the Baranovitchy railway station. This is the strategically important village through which both the Vilna-Rovno and the Minsk-Brest-Litovsk railways pass and around which a great deal of fighting had taken place in the past. Even though this attack was extensively supported by aeroplanes, which bombarded a number of railway stations on that part of the Minsk-Baranovitchy railway which was in the hands of the Russians, it was repulsed by the Russians.

April 3, 1916, brought a renewal of the German attacks against the Uxkull bridgehead. For over an hour and a half

artillery of both heavy and light caliber prepared the way for this attack. But again the Russian lines held and the Germans had to desist. Before Dvinsk and to the south of the fortress artillery duels inflicted considerable damage without affecting the positions on either side. Just north of the Oginski Canal German troops crossed the Shara River and attacked the Russian positions west of the Vilna-Rovno railway, without being able to gain ground. All along the line aircraft were busily engaged in reconnoitering and in dropping bombs on railway stations.

The bombardment of the Uxkull region was again taken up on April 4, 1916, by the German artillery. South of Dvinsk, before the village of Malogolska, the German troops had to evacuate their first-line of trenches when the arising floods of neighboring rivers inundated them. German aeroplanes bombarded the town of Luchonitchy on the Vilna-Rovno railway, just southeast of Baranovitchy.

By April 5, 1916, the German artillery fire before Uxkull had spread to Riga and Jacobstadt, as well as to many points in the Dvinsk sector. Floods were still rising everywhere and the ice on the Dvina began to break up.

Again on April 7, 1916, the German guns thundered against the Russian front from Riga down to Dvinsk. Lake Narotch, where so many battles had already been fought, again was the scene of a Russian attack which resulted in the gain of a few advanced German positions. The next day the Germans promptly replied with a determined artillery attack which regained for their side some of the points lost the previous day. Artillery duels also were staged near Postavy, in the Jacobstadt sector, and at the northernmost end of the line where the German guns bombarded the city of Schlock.

All day on April 9, 1916, the guns of all calibers kept up their death-dealing work along the entire Dvina front, and in the Lake district south of Dvinsk. The railway stations at Remershaf and Dvinsk were bombarded by German aeroplanes, while other units of their aircraft visited the Russian lines along the Oginski Canal. Both on April 11 and 12, 1916, artillery activity



on the Dvina was maintained. A German infantry attack against the Uxkull bridgehead, launched on the 11th, failed.

By this time the ice had all broken up and the floods had stopped rising. In the Pinsk Marshes considerable activity developed on both sides by means of boats. A vivid picture of conditions as they existed at this time in the Pripet Marshes may be formed from the following description from the pen of a special correspondent on the staff of the Russian paper "Russkoye Slovo":

"The marshes," he writes, "have awakened from their winter sleep. Even on the paved roads movement is all but impossible; to the right and left everything is submerged. The small river S———en has become enormously broad; its shores are lost in the distance.

"The marshes have awakened, and are taking their revenge on man for having disturbed the ordinary life of Poliessie. But however difficult the operation, the war must be continued and material obstacles must be overcome. Owing to the enormous area covered by water the inhabitants have taken to boat building. Sentries and patrols move in boats, reconnoitering parties travel in boats, fire on the enemy from boats, and escape in boats from the attentions of the German heavy guns.

"The great marshy basin of the S———en and the P——— is full of new boats, which are called 'baidaka.' These 'baidaka' are small, constructed to hold three or four men. The boats are flat-bottomed and steady. The scouts take the 'baidaka' on their shoulders, and as soon as they come to deep water launch their craft and row to the other side. Small oars or paddles are used, and punting operations are often necessary.

"On the S———en these boats move with great secrecy in the night; in the daytime they are hidden in rushes and reeds.

"It was a foggy day when we decided on making a voyage in a 'baidaka.' 'The Germans came very suddenly to this place,' said one of my companions. 'Our soldiers are concealed everywhere.' We decided to row near the forest, so that in case of necessity we might gain the shelter of the trees. The silence was broken by occasional rifle reports from the direction of

Pinsk, and a big gun roared now and then. Once a shell flew overhead, hissing as it went. But this was very ordinary music to us.

"I was more interested in the intense silence of the marsh, for I knew that all this silence was false. Our secret posts abounded, and perhaps German scouts were in the vicinity. The marsh was full of men in hiding, and the waiting for a chance shot was more terrible than a continuous cannonade. Our sentinels fired twice close by; we did not know why. The shots resounded in the forest. We lay down in our boat and hid our heads. It was difficult for us to advance through the undergrowth as the spaces between the bushes were generally very narrow. We could not row, and we had to punt with our oars.

"We advanced in this fashion half an hour. Then we reached a lakelike expanse clear of growth. 'This is the river S——en,' I was further informed. 'The Germans are on the other side.'

"I could not see where the 'other side' was. The water spread to the horizon and ended only in the purple border of the forest. 'We must be quiet here,' one whispered. The boat moved along the river without a splash, and strange, unaccustomed outlines grew up as we proceeded. 'What place is that yonder?' I asked my neighbor. 'Pinsk,' he replied. I felt excited; we were near a town that was occupied by the Germans, and I wished that boat would turn back.

"We got into the rushes and moved through the jungle as though we were advancing in open water, for the path through the rushes had been prepared in the autumn. We advanced in this manner forty minutes until we could distinctly hear the whistling of steam engines and the bells ringing in the monastery at Pinsk. It was evident that the monks had remained. 'The kaiser himself was in Pinsk in November,' said one of my companions, 'and we knew it. The Germans blew horns all over the railway line and sang their national hymn. In Pinsk there was much animation.'

"A minute or two later the boat stopped and I was told it was dangerous to go farther. On the right we could see the out-

lines of houses and of the quay at Pinsk, only about a thousand paces distant. The town was covered by a thin mist and a faint fog was rising from the marsh.

"There on your left are their heavy guns.' I could see nothing except some trenches near the quay.

"We took our leave of Pinsk. The twilight had arrived and it was necessary to retire."

Though the ice on the rivers and lakes had well broken up by the middle of April, thaw, of course, steadily increased, and with it the volume of water carried by the creeks and rivers. More and more difficult it became, therefore, to carry out military operations, and, as a result of these conditions, they were especially limited at this period.

In spite of this the Russians attempted local advance on April 13, 1916, in the region of Garbunovka, northwest of Dvinsk and south of Lake Narotch; however, though their losses were quite heavy, they could not gain any ground. This was also true of another local attack made against the army of Prince Leopold of Bavaria near Zirin, on the Servetsch River northeast of Baranovitchy. Similarly unsuccessful were German attacks made the same day between Lakes Sventen and Itzen. German artillery still kept up its work along the entire front, especially at Lake Miadziol, south of Dvinsk at Lake Narotch, and at Smorgon, the little railroad station south of the Viliya River on the Vilna-Minsk railway.

On the following day, April 14, 1916, the Russians repeated their efforts in the Servetsch region. After strong artillery preparation they launched another attack near Zirin, and southeast of Kovelitchy, but were again repulsed. The same fate was suffered by an attack attempted northwest of Dvinsk. South of Garbunovka, however, they registered a slight local success. After cutting down four lines of barbed-wire obstacles that had been erected by the Germans, they stormed and occupied two small hills west and south of this village. This gain was maintained in the face of strongly concentrated artillery and rifle fire, and repeated German counterattacks, which later proved very sanguinary to the German troops. German artillery

again directed violent fire against the Russian positions between Lake Narotch and Lake Miadziol and near Smorgon. A German attack made northwest of the latter village broke down under Russian gunfire.

At this point the Germans resumed their offensive at day-break on April 15, 1916, after strong artillery preparation accompanied by the use of asphyxiating gas. Concentrated fire from the Russian artillery, however, prohibited any noticeable advance. During the following day, April 16, 1916, both sides restricted themselves more or less to artillery bombardments, which became especially violent on the Dvina line, around the Uxkull bridgehead, and in the neighborhood of the Russian positions south of the village of Garbunovka, as well as between Lake Narotch and Lake Miadziol.

Two days later, on April 18, 1916, German detachments temporarily regained some of the ground lost about a week before south of Garbunovka. Again on that day the guns on both sides roared along the entire northern sector of the eastern front. On the 19th the bombardment became especially intense at the bridgehead at Uxkull and south of lake.

The artillery attack against the former was maintained throughout the following two days. German scouting parties which crossed the river Shara, north of the Oginski Canal, on April 22, 1916, were surrounded in the woods adjoining and practically annihilated. On the same day a German squadron of ten aeroplanes bombarded the Russian hangars on the island of Oesel, a small island in the Baltic across the entrance to the Gulf of Riga.

As if both sides had agreed to observe the Easter holidays, a lull set in during the next four or five days. Only occasional unimportant local attacks and artillery duels were reported. Aeroplanes were the only branch of the two armies which showed any marked activity. Dvinsk was visited repeatedly by German machines and extensively bombarded. On April 26, 1916, a German airship dropped bombs on the railway station at Duna-Muende, at the mouth of the Dvina, and caused considerable damage. Other railway stations and warehouses at



various points, as well as a number of Russian flying depots, were attacked on April 27, 1916.

The end of April, 1916, brought one more important action, the most important, indeed, which had occurred anywhere on the eastern front since the Russian offensive of the latter half of March, 1916. On April 28, 1916, at dawn, German artillery began a very violent bombardment of the Russian positions south of Lake Narotch. There, between the village of Stavarotche and the extensive private estate of Stakhovtsy, the Germans had lost a series of important trenches on March 20, 1916, during the early part of the short Russian offensive. Part of these positions had been recaptured a few days later on March 26, 1916. Now, after a considerable artillery preparation, a strong attack was launched with the balance of the lost ground as an objective. Large bodies of German infantry came on against the Russian positions in close formation. They recaptured not only all of the ground lost previously but carried their attack successfully into the Russian trenches beyond. The most fierce hand-to-hand fighting resulted. Losses on both sides were severe, especially so on the part of the Russians, who attempted unsuccessfully during the night following to regain the lost positions by a series of violent counterattacks, executed by large forces of infantry, who, advancing in close formation over difficult ground, were terribly exposed to German machine-gun fire and lost heavily in killed and wounded. The Germans officially claimed to have captured as a result of this operation the remarkably large number of fifty-six officers, 5,600 men, five guns, twenty-eight machine guns and ten trench mortars. During the same day artillery attacks were directed against Schlock on the Gulf of Riga and Boersemmende near Riga, as well as against Smorgon, south of the Lake district. An infantry attack, preceded by considerable artillery preparation, near the village of Ginovka, west of Dvinsk, was met by severe fire from the Russian batteries and the Germans were forced to withdraw to their trenches. In the early morning hours German airships bombarded railway stations along the Riga-Petrograd railroad as far as Venden, about fifty miles northeast of Riga, and along

the Dvinsk-Petrograd railway as far as Rzezytsa, about fifty miles northeast of Dvinsk. At the latter point considerable damage was done by a dirigible which dropped explosive and incendiary bombs.

Throughout the last day of April, 1916, artillery duels were fought again at many points. Once more the railway station and bridgehead at Uxkull was made the target for a most violent German artillery attack. Along the Dvinsk sector, too, guns of all caliber were busy.

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## CHAPTER XI

### ARTILLERY DUELS

WITH the beginning of May, the weather became warmer and the rain and watersoaked roads more accessible. In spite of this, however, conditions along the eastern front throughout the entire month of May were very much the same as during April. Continuously the guns on both sides thundered against each other, with a fairly well-maintained intensity which, however, would increase from time to time in some places. Frequently, almost daily, infantry attacks, usually preceded by artillery preparation, would be launched at various points. These, however, were almost all of local character and executed by comparatively small forces. Even smaller detachments, frequently hardly more than scouting parties, often would reach the opponent's lines, but only rarely succeed in capturing trenches, and then usually were soon forced to retire to their own lines in the face of successive counterattacks. Again in May the story of events on the eastern front is lacking in sensational movements, accompanied by equally unsensational success or failure. But, nevertheless, it is on both sides a story of unceasing activity, of unending labor, of unremitting toil, of endless suffering, of unlimited heroism, and of unsurpassed courage, the more so, because much of all that was accomplished

was counted only as part of the regular daily routine, and lacked both the incentive and the reward of widespread publicity, which more frequently attaches to military operations of more extensive character. Not for years to come will it be possible to write a detailed history of this phase of the Great War as far as the eastern front is concerned. Not until the regimental histories of the various Russian, German and Austro-Hungarian military units will have been completed will it become practicable to recount all the uncounted deeds of valor accomplished by heroes whose names and deeds now must remain unknown to the world at large, even though both perchance have beer for months and months on the lips of equally brave comrades in arms.

The new month was opened by the Germans with another intensive artillery bombardment of the Uxkull bridgehead. Farther to the south, before Dvinsk, and also at many points in the Lake district to the south of this fortress, the Russian positions likewise were raked by violent gunfire. An attempted offensive movement on the extreme northern end of the line before Raggazem, on the Gulf of Riga, broke down before the Russian gunfire, even before it was fully developed. German naval airships successfully bombarded Russian military depots at Perman, while another squadron of sea planes inflicted considerable damage to the Russian aerodrome at Papenholm. A Russian squadron was less successful in an attack on the German naval establishment at Vindau on the east shore of the Baltic Sea.

May 2, 1916, brought a continuation of artillery activity at many points. It was especially intensive in the Jacobstadt and Dvinsk sectors of the Dvina front, as well as in the Ziriu-Baranovitchy sector in the south and along the Oginski Canal, still farther to the south. At two other points the Germans, after extensive artillery preparation, attempted to launch infantry attacks, but were promptly driven back. This occurred near the village of Antony, ten miles northwest of Postavy, where two successive attacks failed, and farther north in the region east of Vidzy.

The following day again was devoted to artillery duels at many points. Aeroplanes, also, became more active. German planes bombarded many places south of Dvinsk, and attacked the railway establishments at Molodetchna, on the Vilna-Minsk railway, at Minsk, and at Luniniets, in the Pripet Marshes, east of Pinsk on the Pinsk-Gomel railway. May 4, 1916, brought especially intensive artillery fire along the entire Dvina front, in the Krevo sector south of the Vilna-Minsk railway, and along the Oginski Canal, particularly in the region of Valistchie.

The Dvina front along its entire length was once more the subject of a violent artillery attack from German batteries on May 5, 1916. Uxkull, so many times before the aim of the German fire, again received special attention. The Friedrichstadt sector, too, came in for its share. All along this front aeroplanes not only guided the gunfire, but supported it extensively by dropping bombs. Between Jacobstadt and Dvinsk a Russian battery succeeded in reaching a German munition depot and with one well-placed hit caused havoc among men and munitions. Southeast of Lake Med a surprise attack, carried out by comparatively small Russian forces, resulted in the capture of some German trenches. Northwest of Krochin strong German forces, after artillery preparation lasting over three hours, attacked the village of Dubrovka. Some ground was gained, only to be lost again shortly after as a result of a ferocious counterattack made by Russian reinforcements which had been brought up quickly.

May 6, 1916, brought a slightly new variation in fighting. Russian torpedo boats appeared in the Gulf of Riga, off the west coast, and bombarded, without success, the two towns of Rojen and Margrafen. Artillery fire of considerable violence marked the next day, May 7, 1916. Russian batteries before Dvinsk caused a fire at Ill, the little town just northwest of Dvinsk on the Dvinsk-Ponevesh railway, and so well was this bombardment maintained that the Germans were unable to extinguish the conflagration before it had reached some of their munition depots. In the early morning hours very violent gunfire was directed south of Illuxt. But an infantry attack, for which this



bombardment was to act as preparation, failed. Other bombardments were directed against Lake Ilsen and the sector north of it, and against the region south of the village of Vishnieff on the Beresina River. Mining operations of considerable extent were carried out that night near the village of Novo Selki, south of the town of Krevo. On May 8, 1916, artillery fire again roared along the Dvina front, especially against the Uxkull bridge-head. An attack in force was made by German troops against the village of Peraplianka north of Smorgon on the Viliya May 9, 1916. After considerable artillery preparation the Germans rushed up against the Russian barbed-wire obstacles. There, however, they were stopped by concentrated artillery and rifle fire and, after heavy losses, had to withdraw. A Russian attack of a similar nature south of Garbunovka was not any more successful. In the Pripet Marshes, too, artillery operations had by now become possible again and the Russian positions west of the village of Pleshichitsa, southeast of Pinsk, were subjected to a violent bombardment.

Throughout the balance of May not a day passed during which guns of all calibers did not maintain a violent bombardment at many points along the entire front. Especially frequent and severe was the gunfire which the Germans directed against the Dvina sector of the Russian positions. But, just as in the past weeks, the result, though not at all negligible as far as the damage inflicted on men, material, and fortifications was concerned, was practically nil in regard to any change in the location of the front.

Infantry attacks during this period were not lacking, though they were less frequent than artillery bombardments, and were at all times only of local character, and in most cases executed with limited forces. A great deal of this kind of fighting occurred in the region of Olyka where engagements took place almost every day. One of the few more important events was a German attack against the Jacobstadt sector of the Dvina front. For two days, May 10 and 11, 1916, the fighting continued, becoming especially violent to the north of the railway station of Selburg on the Mitau-Kreutzburg railway. There

very heavy artillery fire succeeding the infantry attacks had destroyed some small villages for the possession of which the most furious kind of hand-to-hand fighting ensued. Finally the Germans captured by storm about 500 yards of the Russian positions as well as some 300 unwounded soldiers and a few machine guns and mine throwers.

Engagements of a similar character, though not always yielding such definite results to either side, occurred on May 11, 1916, southwest of Lake Medum, on May 12, 1916, at many points along the Oginski Canal and also in the Pripet Marshes, where fighting now had again become a physical possibility. On the latter day a Russian attempt to recapture the positions lost previously near Selburg failed.

Thus the fortunes of war swayed from side to side. One day would bring to the Germans the gain of a trench, the capture of a few hundred men or guns, or the destruction of an enemy battery, to be followed the next day by a proportionate loss. So closely was the entire line guarded, so strongly and elaborately had the trenches and other fortifications been built up, that the fighting developed into a multitude of very short but closely contested engagements. In each one of these the numbers engaged were very small, though the grand total of men fighting on a given day at so many separate points on a front of some 500 miles was, of course, still immense.

Amongst the places which saw the most fighting during this period were many which had been mentioned a great many times before. Again and again there appeared in the official records such names as: Lake Sventen, Krevno, Lake Miadziol, Ostroff, Lake Narotch, Smorgon, Dahlen Island, and many others.

The net result of all the fighting during May, 1916, was that both sides lost considerable in men and material. Both Russians and Germans, however, had succeeded in maintaining their respective lines in practically the same position in which they had been at the beginning of May.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE GREAT RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

DURING the first two days of June, 1916, a lull occurred at almost all important points of the eastern front. Only one or two engagements of extremely minor importance between scouting parties were reported. In the light of future events this remarkable condition might well be called ominous, especially if one connects with it a decided increase in Russian aeroplane activity, which resulted in two strong attacks on June 1, 1916, against points on the Vilna-Minsk and Sarny-Kovel railways.

On June 2, 1916, a more or less surprising increase in the strength of the Russian artillery fire was noticed, especially along the Bessarabian and Volhynian fronts and in the Ikva sector. So strong did this fire become that the official Austrian statement covering that day says that at several places the artillery duels "assumed the character of artillery battles."

More and more the extent and violence of the Russian artillery attack increased. The next day, June 3, 1916, Russian artillery displayed the greatest activity all along the southern half of the eastern front, and covered the Dniester, Strypa, and Ikva sectors, as well as the gap between the last two rivers, northwest of Tarnopol, and the entire Volhynian front. Near Olyka in the region of the three Volhynian fortresses of Rovno, Dubno, and Lutsk, the Russian gunfire was especially intense along a front of about seventeen miles. That this unusually strong artillery activity increased the alarm of the Austro-Hungarian commanders may readily be seen from the concluding sentence of that day's official Austrian statement, which read: "Everywhere there are signs of an impending infantry attack."

The storm began to break the next day, June 4, 1916. That it was entirely unexpected, was not likely, for this new Russian offensive coincided with the Austro-Hungarian offensive against

the Italian front which by that time had assumed threatening developments. Undoubtedly it was one of the objects of the Russian offensive to force the Austrians to withdraw troops from the Italian front and at least curtail their offensive efforts against the Italian armies, if not to stop them entirely. At the same time the limits within which the Russian offensive was undertaken indicated that the Russian General Staff had another much more important object in view, the breaking of the German-Austrian front at about the point where the German right touched the Austrian left. Along a front of over 300 miles the Russian forces attacked. From the Pinth in the south—at the Rumanian border to the outrunners of the Pripet Marshes—near Kolki and the bend of the Styr—in the north the battle raged. At many points along this line the Russians achieved important successes, with unusual swiftness they were pushing whatever advantage they were able to gain. But not only swiftness did they employ. Immense masses of men were thrown against the strongly fortified Austrian lines and quantities of munitions of the Russian artillery which transcended everything that had ever been done along this line on the eastern front. Not against one or two points chosen for that particular purpose, but against every important point on the entire line the Russian attacks were hurled. The most bitter struggle developed at Okna, northwest of Tarnopol, at Koklow, at Novo Alexinez, along the entire Ikva, at Sanor, around Olyka and from there north to Dolki. No matter how strong the natural defenses, no matter how skillful the artificial obstacles, on and on rolled the thousands and thousands of Russians. So overwhelming was this onrush that the Austro-Hungarians had to give way in many places in spite of the most valiant resistance, and so quick did it come that as a result of the first day's work the Russians could claim to have captured 13,000 prisoners, many guns and machine guns.

By June 5, 1916, this number had increased to 480 officers, 25,000 men, twenty-seven guns and fifty machine guns. The battle on the northeast front continued on the whole front of 218 miles with undiminished stubbornness. North of Okna,



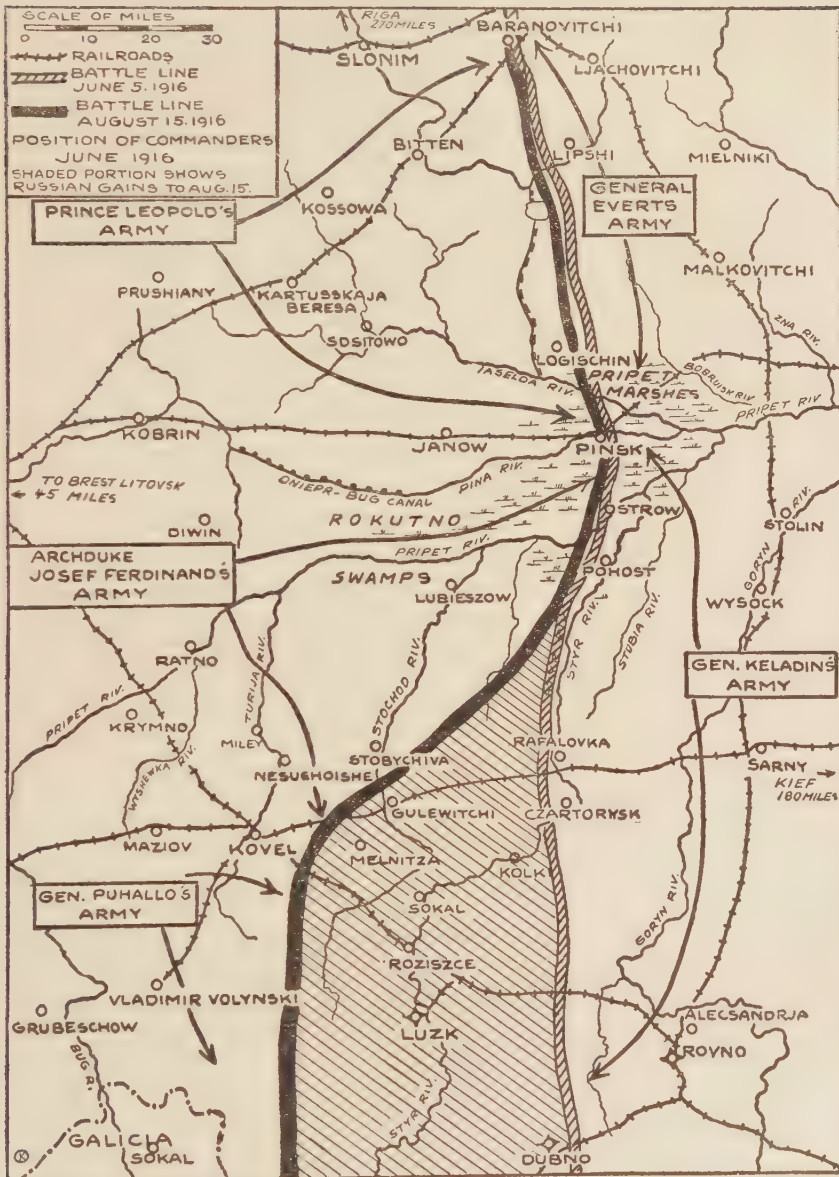
the Austrians had, after stiff and fluctuating battles, to withdraw their shattered first positions to the line prepared three miles to the south. Near Jarlowiec, on the lower Strypa, the Russians attacked after artillery preparation. They were repulsed at some places by hand fighting. At the same time a strong Russian attack west of Trembowla (south of Tarnopol) broke down under Austrian fire. West-northwest of Tarnopol there was bitter fighting. Near Sopanow (southeast of Dubno) there were numerous attacks by the enemy. Between Mlynow, on the Ikva, and the regions northwest of Olyka, the Russians were continually becoming stronger, and the most bitter kind of fighting developed.

Especially heavy fighting developed in the region before Lutsk. There the pressure from the Russian army of General Brussilov had become so strong that the Austrians had found it necessary by June 6, 1916, to withdraw their forces to the plain of Lutsk, just to the east of that fortress and of the river Styr. This represented a gain of at least twenty miles made in two days. The official Russian statement of that day claimed that during the same period General Brussilov's armies had captured 900 officers, more than 40,000 rank and file, seventy-seven guns, 134 machine guns and forty-nine trench mortars, and, in addition, searchlights, telephone, field kitchens, a large quantity of arms and war material, and great reserves of ammunition.

On the other hand, the Austrians were still offering a determined resistance at most points south and north of Lutsk, and Russian attacks were repulsed with sanguinary losses at many places, as for instance at Rafalowka, on the lower Styr, near Berestiany, on the Corzin Brook, near Saponow, on the upper Strypa, near Jazlowice, on the Dniester, and on the Bessarabian frontier. Northwest of Tarnopol were repulsed two attacks. At another point seven attacks were repulsed.

The Russians also suffered heavy losses in the plains of Okna (north of the Bessarabian frontier) and at Debronoutz, where there were bitter hand-to-hand engagements.

It was quite clear by this time that the Russian offensive threatened not only the pushing back of the Austrian line, but



## THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE FROM PINSK TO DUBNO

their very existence. Unless the Austrians either succeeded in repulsing the Russians decidedly or else found some other way of reducing immediately the strength of this extensive offensive movement, it was inevitable that many of the important conquests which the Central Powers had made in the fall of 1915 would be lost again. In spite of this and in spite of the quite apparent strength of the Russian forces, it caused considerable surprise when it was announced officially on June 8, 1916, that the fortress of Lutsk had been captured by the Russians on June 7, 1916.

The fortress lies halfway between Rovno and Kovel, on the important railway line that runs from Brest-Litovsk to the region southwest of Kiev. It is this railway sector, between Rovno and Kovel, that has been the objective of the Russian attacks ever since the Teuton offensive came to a standstill eight months ago, for its control would give the Russians a free hand to operate southward against the lines in Galicia.

Lutsk is a minor fortress, the most westerly of the Volhynian triangle formed by Rovno, Dubno, and Lutsk. The town is the center of an important grain trade, and the districts of which it is the center contained before the war a considerable German colony. It is supposed to have been founded in the seventh century. In 1791 it was taken by Russia. It is the seat of a Roman Catholic bishop and at the outbreak of the war had a population of about 18,000. During the war it suffered a varied fate. On September 1, 1915, it was captured by the combined German and Austro-Hungarian forces which had accomplished a month before the capture of Warsaw and had forced the Russian legions to a full retreat. Twenty-three days later it was evacuated by the forces of the Central Powers and recaptured by the Russians on September 24, 1915. Four days later, September 28, 1915, the Russians were forced to withdraw again, and on October 1, 1915, it fell once more into the hands of the Austrians. During the winter the Russians had made a dash for its recapture, but had not succeeded, and ever since the front had been along a line about twenty miles to the east. The capture of the fortress was due primarily to the immensity of the

Russian artillery, which maintained a violent, continuous fire, smashing the successive rows of wire entanglements, breastworks, and trenches. The town was surrounded with nineteen rows of entanglements. The laconic order to attack was given at dawn on June 7, 1916. Up to noon the issue hung in the balance, but at 1 o'clock the Russians made a breach in the enemy's position near the village of Podgauzy. They repulsed a fierce Austrian counterattack and captured 3,000 prisoners and many guns. Almost simultaneously another Russian force advanced on Lutsk along the Dubno and stormed the trenches of the village of Krupov, taking several thousand prisoners. General Brusilov seemed to have at his disposal an immense infantry force, which he sent forward in rapid, successive waves after artillery preparation. Reserves were brought up so quickly that the enemy was given no time to recover from one assault before another was delivered.

Fifty-eight officers, 11,000 men and large quantities of guns, machine guns, and ammunition fell in the hands of the victorious Russian armies. On the same day on which Lutsk was captured other forces stormed strong Austrian positions on the lower Strypa in Galicia between Trybuchovice and Jazlovice and crossed both the Ikva and the Styr. Along the northern part of the front, north of the Pripet River, comparative quiet reigned throughout the early stages of the Russian offensive. During the evening of June 7, 1916, however, German artillery violently bombarded the region northeast of Krevo and south of Smorgon, southeast of Vilna. The bombardment soon extended farther north, and during the night of June 8, 1916, the Germans took the offensive there with considerable forces.

In the neighborhood of Molodetchna station (farther east) on the Vilna-Minsk railway, a German aeroplane dropped four bombs.

Five German aeroplanes carried out a raid on the small town of Jogishin, north of Pinsk, dropping about fifty bombs.

The battle in Volhynia and Galicia continued with undiminished force on June 8, 1916. Near Sussk, to the east of Lutsk, a squadron of Cossacks attacked the enemy behind his fortified



lines, capturing two guns, eight ammunition wagons, and 200 boxes of ammunition.

Near Boritin, four miles southeast of Lutsk, Russian scouts captured two 4-inch guns, with four officers and 160 men. A 4-inch gun and thirty-five ammunition wagons were captured, near Dobriatin on the Ikva below Mlynów, fourteen miles southeast of Lutsk.

Young troops, just arrived at the front, vied with seasoned Russian regiments in deeds of valor. Some regiments formed of Territorial elements by an impetuous attack drove back the Austrians on the Styr, and pressing close on their heels forced the bridgehead near Rozhishche, thirteen miles north of Lutsk, at the same time taking about 2,500 German and Austrian prisoners, as well as machine guns and much other booty. Other regiments forced a crossing over the Strypa and some advanced detachments even reached the next river, the Złota Potok, about five miles to the west.

The number of prisoners captured by the Russians continually increased. Exclusive of those already reported—namely, 958 officers, and more than 51,000 Austrian and German soldiers, they captured in the course of the fighting on June 8, 1916, 185 officers and 13,714 men, making the totals so far registered in the present operations 1,143 officers and 64,714 men.

The next day, June 9, 1916, the troops under General Brussilov continued the offensive and the pursuit of the retreating Austrians. Fighting with the latter's rear guards, they crossed the river Styr above and below Lutsk.

In Galicia, northwest of Tarnopol, in the regions of Gliadki and Cebrow, heavy fighting developed for the possession of heights, which changed hands several times. During that day's fighting the Russians captured again large numbers of Austrians, consisting of ninety-seven officers and 5,500 men and eleven guns, making a total up to the present of 1,240 officers and about 71,000 men, ninety-four guns, 167 machine guns, fifty-three mortars, and a large quantity of other war material.

At dawn of June 10, 1916, Russian troops entered Buczacz on the west bank of the Strypa and, developing the offensive

along the Dniester, carried the village of Scianka, eight miles west of the Strypa. In the village of Potok Zloty, four miles west of the Strypa, they seized a large artillery park and large quantities of shells.

In the north the Germans again attempted to relieve the pressure on their allies by attacking in force at many points. Artillery duels were fought along the Dvina front and on the Oginski Canal.

Without let up, however, the Russian advance continued. So furious and swift was the onslaught of the czar's armies that the Austrians lost thousands upon thousands of prisoners and vast masses of war material of every kind. For instance, in one sector alone the Austrians were forced to retreat so rapidly that the Russians were able to gather in, according to official reports, twenty-one searchlights, two supply trains, twenty-nine field kitchens, forty-seven machine guns, 193 tons of barbed wire, 1,000 concrete girders, 7,000,000 concrete cubes, 160 tons of coal, enormous stores of ammunition, and a great quantity of arms and other war material. In another sector they captured 30,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 300 boxes of machine-gun ammunition, 200 boxes of hand grenades, 1,000 rifles in good condition, four machine guns, two optical range finders, and even a brand-new Norton well, a portable contrivance for the supply of drinking water.

The prisoners captured during June 10, 1916, comprised one general, 409 officers, and 35,100 soldiers. The material booty included thirty guns, thirteen machine guns, and five trench mortars. The total Russian captures in the course of about a week thus amount to one general, 1,649 officers, more than 106,000 soldiers, 124 guns of all sorts, 180 machine guns, and fifty-eight trench mortars.

This was now the seventh day of the new Russian offensive, and on it another valuable prize fell into the hands of General Brussilov, the town and fortress of Dubno. This brought his forces within twenty-five miles of the Galician border and put the czar's forces again in the possession of the Volhynian fortress triangle, consisting of Lutsk, Dubno, and Rovno.

Dubno, which had been in the hands of the Austrians since September 7, 1916, lies on the Rovno-Brody-Lemberg railway, and is about eighty-two miles from the Galician capital, Lemberg. The town has about 14,000 inhabitants, mostly Jews, engaged in the grain, tobacco, and brickmaking industry. It was in existence as early as the eleventh century.

So powerful was the Russian onrush on Dubno that the attackers swept westward apparently without meeting any resistance, for on the same day on which the fortress fell, some detachments crossed the Ikva. One part of these forces even swept as far westward as the region of the village of Demidovka, on the Mlynów-Berestetchko road, thirteen miles southwest of the Styr at Mlynów, compelling the enemy garrison of the Mlynów to surrender. Demidovka is twenty-five miles due west of Dubno. Thus the Russians have in Volhynia alone pushed the Austro-Hungarian lines back thirty-two miles.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### THE RUSSIAN RECONQUEST OF THE BUKOWINA

**S**IMULTANEOUSLY with the drive in Volhynia, the extreme left wing of the Russian southern army under General Lechitsky forced the Austro-Hungarians to withdraw their whole line in the northeastern Bukowina, invaded the crownland with strong forces and advanced to within fourteen miles of the capital, Czernowitz. On the Strypa the Austrians had to fall back from their principal position north of Buczacz. In spite of the most desperate resistance and in the face of a violent flanking fire, and even curtain fire, and the explosions of whole sets of mines, General Lechitsky's troops captured the Austrian positions south of Dobronowce, fourteen miles northeast of Czernowitz. In that region alone the Russians claimed to have captured 18,000 soldiers, one general, 347 officers, and ten guns.

Southeast of Zaleszczyki on the Dniester the Russians again were victorious and forced the withdrawal of the Austrian lines. Fourteen miles north of Czernowitz the Austrian troops tried to stem the tide by blowing up the railroad station of Jurkoutz. At the same time they made their first important counterattack in the Lutsk region. Making a sudden stand, after being driven over the river Styr, north of Lutsk, they turned on the Russians with the aid of German detachments rushed to them by General von Hindenburg, drove the Muscovite troops back over the Styr and took 1,508 prisoners, including eight officers. At other points, too, the Austrian resistance stiffened perceptibly, especially in the region of Torgovitsa, and on the Styr below Lutsk.

Dubno, a modern fortress, built, like Lutsk, mainly in support of Rovno, to ward off possible aggression, now supplied an excellent starting point for a Russian drive into the heart of Galicia. Proceeding on both sides of the Rovno-Dubno-Brody-Lemberg railway the Russians should be able to cover the eighty-two miles which still separates them from the Galician capital within a comparatively short time, provided that Austrian resistance in this region continues as weak as it has been up to date.

A greater danger than the capture of Lemberg was, however, presented by the Russian advance into the Bukowina. If these two Russian drives—to Lemberg and to Czernowitz—would prove successful the whole southeastern Austro-Hungarian army would find itself squeezed between two Russian armies, and its only escape would be into the difficult Carpathian Mountain passes, where the Russians, this time well equipped and greatly superior in numbers, could be expected to be more successful than in their first Carpathian campaign.

Still the Russian advance continued, although on June 11, 1916, there was a slight slowing down on account of extensive storms that prevailed along the southern part of the front.

In Galicia, in the region of the villages of Gliadki and Verobieyka, north of Tarnopol, the Austrians attacked repeatedly and furiously, but were repulsed on the morning of the 11th. Farther south, however, near the town of Bobulintze, on the Strypa, fifteen miles north of Buczacz, the Austro-Hungarians,



strongly reenforced by Germans, scored a substantial success. They launched a furious counterattack, bringing the Russian assaults to a standstill and even forcing the Muscovite troops to retreat a short distance. According to the German War Office more than 1,300 Russian prisoners were taken.

Simultaneously with this partial relief in the south Field Marshal von Hindenburg began an attack at several points against the Russian right wing and part of the center. He penetrated the czar's lines at two points near Jacobstadt, halfway between Riga and Dvinsk, and at Kochany between Lake Narotch and Dvinsk. At the three other points, in the Riga zone, south of Lake Drisviaty and on the Lassjolda, his attacks broke down under the Russian fire.

Lemberg, Galicia's capital, was now threatened from three sides. Czernowitz, the capital of the Bukowina, was even in a more precarious position. It had been masked by the extreme left wing of the Russian armies and, unless some unexpected turn came to the assistance of the Austrians, its fall was sure to be only a matter of days, or possibly even of hours. All of southern Volhynia had been overrun by the Russians who were then, on the ninth day of their offensive, forty-two miles west of the point from where it had begun in that province.

Northwest of Rojitché, in northwestern Volhynia, after dislodging the Germans, General Brussilov on June 12, 1916, approached the river Stokhod. West of Lutsk he occupied Torchin and continued to press the enemy back.

On the Dniester sector and farther General Lechitsky's troops, having crossed the river after fighting, captured many fortified points and also the town of Zaleszczyky, twenty-five miles northwest of Czernowitz. The village of Jorodenka, ten miles farther, northwest of Zaleszczyky, also was captured.

On the Pruth sector, between Doyan and Niepokoloutz, the Russian troops approached the left bank of the river, near the bridgehead of Czernowitz.

The only point at which the Austrian line held was near Kolki in northern Volhynia, south of the Styr. There attempts by the Russians to cross that river failed and some 2,000 men were

# THE BALKANS

ALSO

## THE NEW RUSSIAN DRIVES

WAITING SOLDIERS AND SAILORS IN THE BALKANS  
OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE IN RUSSIA'S GREAT CAMPAIGN



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German railway employees correcting their watches, in accordance with the "daylight saving" plan for setting timepieces an hour ahead and thus actually beginning the working day an hour earlier



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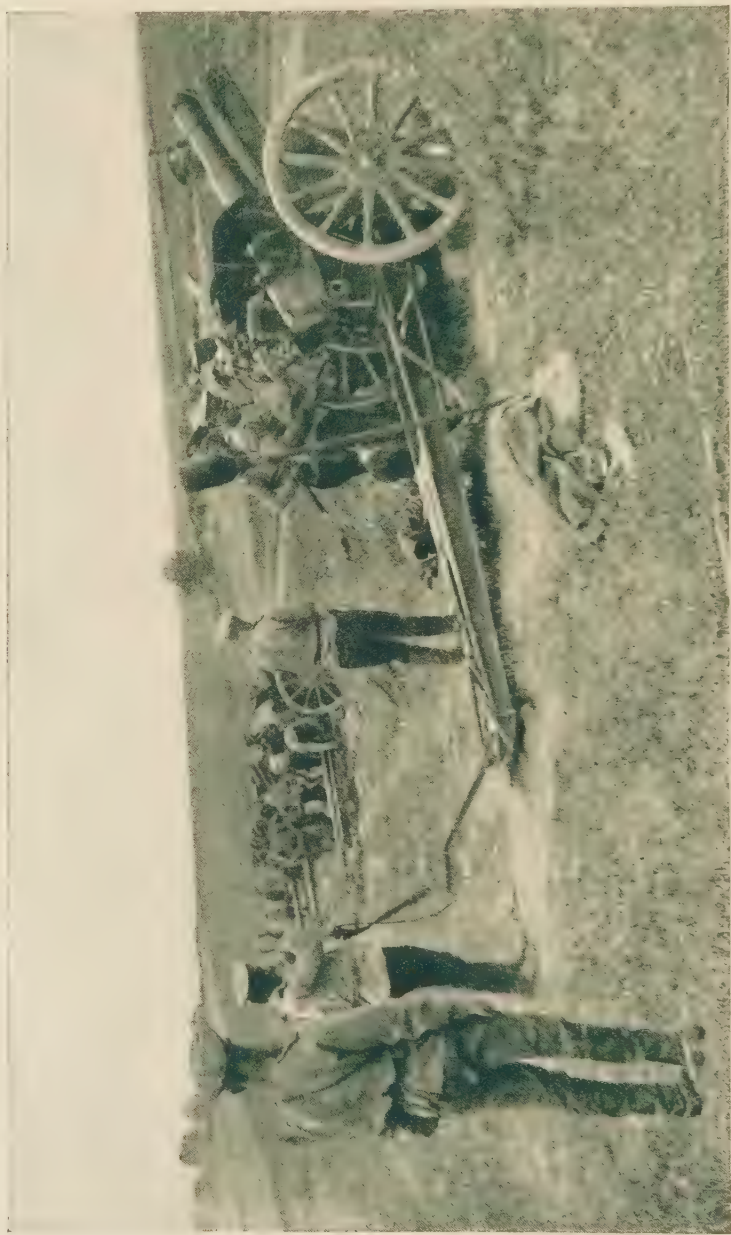
The happier side of armed occupation. These German soldiers are pleasing themselves and the inhabitants of a little Macedonian village by an impromptu open-air concert



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Eager British sailors wading out to the wreck of a Zeppelin, which fell in the marsh country near Saloniki.  
The great airship was brought down by a lucky shot from a British battleship





Russian artillery preparing for a fresh attack on the Austrians in the great drive in which they swept over Galicia. In the drive that began in the summer of 1916, they were not hampered by lack of guns or ammunition



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German soldiers, wearied by long marches on their way to the Russian front are snatching an opportunity for sleep. As usual, digging implements seem to be an important part of the equipment



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German soldiers strengthening and reorganizing their trenches, to be ready for determined resistance to the Russian armies, advancing in their new offensive





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A perfectly constructed Russian trench and the bodies of men who died in defending it. Lines of entrenchments like this are far more effective than forts





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Russian soldiers bringing in a captured German field gun. The armies of Russia are so that she can spare men for France and the Balkans, even while conducting a great offensive in Europe and active campaigns against Turkey

captured by the Austro-Hungarians. In the north Field Marshal von Hindenburg's efforts to divert the Russian activities in the south by a general offensive along the Dvina line had not developed beyond increased artillery bombardments which apparently exerted no influence on the movements of the Russian armies in Volhynia, Galicia and the Bukowina.

The only hopeful sign for the fate of the threatened Austro-Hungarian armies was the fact that the daily number of prisoners taken by the Russians gradually seemed to decrease, indicating that the Austrians found it possible by now, if not to withstand the Russian onslaught, at least to save the largest part of their armies. Even at that the Russian General Staff claimed to have captured by June 12, 1916, a total of 1,700 officers and 114,000 men. Inasmuch as it was estimated that the total Austrian forces on the southwestern front at the beginning of the operations were 670,000, of which, according to Russian claims, the losses cannot be less than 200,000, including an estimated 80,000 killed and wounded, the total losses now constituted 30 per cent of the enemy's effectives.

How the news of the continued Russian successes was received in the empire's capital and what, at that time, was expected as the immediate results of this remarkable drive, secondary only to the Austro-German drive of the summer and fall of 1915, are vividly described in the following letter, written from Petrograd on June 13, 1916, by a special correspondent of the London "Times":

"As the successive bulletins recording our unprecedented victories on the southwestern fronts come to hand, the pride and joy of the Russian people are becoming too great for adequate expression. There is an utter absence of noisy demonstrations. The whole nation realizes that the victory is the result of the combined efforts of all classes, which have given the soldiers abundant munitions, and of an admirable organization.

"The remarkable progress in training the reserves since the beginning of this year was primarily responsible for the enormous increase in the efficiency of our armies and the heightening of their morale. The strategy of our southwestern offensive has

been seconded by a remarkable improvement in the railways and communications. Last, but not least, it must be noted that the Russian high command long ago recognized that the essential condition of the overthrow of the Austro-German league, so far as this front is concerned, was the completion of the work of disintegration in the Austrian armies, in which Russia has already achieved such wonderful results. At the rate at which they are at present being exterminated it would require many weeks completely to exhaust the military resources of the Dual Empire and to turn the flank of the German position in Poland.

"The consensus of military opinion is inclined to the belief that the Germans will not venture to transfer large reenforcements to the Galician front, as it would require too much time and give the Allies a distinct advantage in other theaters. But as the Germans were obviously bound to do something to save the Austrian army, they are endeavoring to create a diversion north of the Pripet in various directions. The points selected for these efforts are almost equidistant on the right flank of the Riga front, near Jacobstadt, and south of Lake Drisviaty, where the enemy's maximum activity synchronized with General Lechitsky's greatest successes on the southern front. . . .

"On the southwestern front all eyes are now focused on General Lechitsky's rapid advance on Zaleszczyky and Czernowitz. As the official reports show, the Austrians have already blown up a bridge across the Pruth at Mahala, thus indicating that they entertain scant hope of being able to hold Czernowitz, and they may even now be evacuating the city. General Lechitsky's gallant army, which some months ago stormed the important stronghold of Uscieszko on the Dniester, has performed prodigies of valor in its advance during the last few days. The precipitous banks of the Dniester had been converted into one continuous stronghold which appeared impregnable and last December defied all our efforts to overcome the enemy's resistance. In the first few days of the offensive we took one of the principal positions between Okna and Dobronowce, southeast of Zaleszczyky. Dobronowce and the surrounding mountains, which are thickly covered with forests, were regarded by the enemy as a reliable protection



against any advance on Czernowitz. The country beyond offers no such opportunities for defense.

"General Brussilov's operations on the flanks of the Austro-German army under Von Linsingen are proceeding with wonderful rapidity. All the efforts of German reenforcements to drive in a counterwedge at Kolki, Rozhishshe and Targowica, at the wings and apex of our Rovno salient, proved ineffectual. On the other hand, we have scored most important successes west of Dubno, capturing the highly important point of Demidovka, marking an advance of twenty miles to the west. Demidovka places us in command of the important forest region of Dubno, which, as its name indicates, is famous for its oak trees. These forests form a natural stronghold, of which the Ikva and the Styr may be compared to immense moats protecting it on two sides. The possession of this valuable base will enable General Brussilov to checkmate any further effort on the part of the enemy to counter our offensive at Targowica, which is situated fifteen miles to the north.

"The valiant troops of our Eighth Army, who have altogether advanced nearly thirty miles into the enemy's position in the direction of Kovel, will doubtless be in a position powerfully to assist the thrust of the troops beyond Tarnopol and join hands with them in the possible event of an advance on Lemberg."

On June 13, 1914, the progress of the Russian armies continued along the entire 250-mile front from the Pripet River to the Rumanian border. The capture of twenty officers, 6,000 men, six cannon, and ten machine guns brought the total, captured by the Russian troops, up to about 120,000 men, 1,720 officers, 130 cannon and 260 machine guns, besides immense quantities of material and munitions.

South of Kovel the Austrians, reenforced by German troops, offered the most determined resistance near the village of Zaturzi halfway between Lutsk and Vladimir-Volynski. Southwest of Dubno, in the direction of Brody and Lemberg, Kozin was stormed by the Russians, who were now only ten miles from the Galician border. To the north of Buczacz, on the right bank of the Strypa, a strong counterattack launched by the Austrians could



not prevent the Russians from occupying the western heights in the region of Gaivivonka and Bobulintze, where only two days before the Austrians had been able to drive back their opponents. But the most furious battle of all raged for the possession of Czernowitz. A serious blow was struck to the Austro-Hungarian defenders when the Russians captured the town of Sniatyn, on the Pruth, about twenty miles northwest of Czernowitz, on the Czernowitz-Kolomea-Lemberg railway. This seriously threatened the brave garrison which held the capital of the Bukowina, as it put the Russians in a position where they could sweep southward and cut off the defenders of Czernowitz, if they should hold out to the last. In fact the entire Austro-Hungarian army in the Bukowina was now facing this peril.

The first massed attack against Von Hindenburg's lines since the offensive in the south began was delivered on June 13, 1916, when, after a systematic artillery preparation by the heaviest guns at the Russians' disposal, troops in dense formation launched a furious assault against the Austro-German positions north of Baranovitchy. The attack was repeated six times, but each broke down under the Teuton fire with serious losses to the attackers, who in their retreat were placed under the fire of their own artillery.

Baranovitchy is an important railway intersection of great strategical value and saw some of the fiercest fighting during the Russian retreat in the fall of 1915. It is the converging point of the Brest-Litovsk-Moscow and Vilna-Rovno railways. Sixty-one miles to the west lies Lida, one of the commanding points of the entire railway systems of western Russia.

Again, on June 14, 1916, the number of prisoners in the hands of the Russians was increased by 100 officers and 14,000 men, bringing the grand total up to over 150,000. All along the entire front the Russians pressed their advance, gaining considerable ground, without, however, achieving any success of great importance.

Closer and closer the lines were drawn about Czernowitz, though on June 16, 1916, the city was still reported as held by

the Austrians. On that day furious fighting also took place south of Buczacz, where the Russians in vain attempted to cross the Dniester in order to join hands with their forces which were advancing from the north against Czernowitz with Horodenka, on the south bank of the Dniester as a base. To the west of Lutsk in the direction toward Kovel, now apparently the main objective of General Brussilov, the Austro-Hungarians had received strong German reinforcements under General von Linsingen and successfully denied to the Russians a crossing over the Stokhod and Styr Rivers.

June 17, 1916, was a banner day in the calendar of the Russian troops. It brought them once more into possession of the Bukowinian capital, Czernowitz.

Czernowitz is one of the towns whose people have suffered most severely from the fluctuating tide of war.

Its cosmopolitan population, the greater part of whom are Germans, have seen it change hands no less than five times in twenty-one months. The first sweep of the Russian offensive in September, 1914, carried beyond it, but they had to capture it again two months later, when they proceeded to drive the Austrians out of the whole of the Bukowina. By the following February, however, the Austrians, with German troops to help them, were again at its gates, and they forced the Russians to retire beyond the Pruth. For a week the battle raged about the small town of Sudagora, opposite Czernowitz, the seat of a famous dynasty of miracle-working rabbis, but the forces of the Central Powers were in overwhelming numbers, and with the loss of Kolomea—the railway junction forty-five miles to the west, which the Russians were again rapidly approaching—the whole region became untenable and the Russians retired to the frontier.

Czernowitz is a clean and pleasant town of recent date. A century ago it was an insignificant village of 5,000 people. Today it has several fine buildings, the most conspicuous of which is the Episcopal Palace, with a magnificent reception hall. In one of the squares stands the monument erected in 1875 to commemorate the Austrian occupation of the Bukowina.

The population consists for the most part of Germans, Ruthenes, Rumanians, and Poles. Among these are 21,000 Jews, and there are also a number of Armenians and gypsies. With all these diverse elements, therefore, the town presents a very varied appearance, and on market days the modern streets are crowded with peasants, attired in their national dress, who mingle with people turned out in the latest fashions of Paris and Vienna.

How violently the Russians assaulted Czernowitz is vividly described in a letter from a correspondent of a German newspaper who was at Czernowitz during this attack.

"The attack began on June 11, 1916. Shells fell incessantly, mostly in the lower quarter of the town and the neighborhood of the station. They caused a terrible panic. Incendiary shells started many fires.

"Austrian artillery replied vigorously. The Russians during the night of June 12, 1916, attempted a surprise attack against the northeast corner defenses, launching a tremendous artillery fire against them and then sending storming columns forward. These were stopped, however, by the defenders, who prevented a crossing of the Pruth, inflicting severe losses upon the Russians.

"The Russian artillery attack on the morning of June 16, 1916, was terrific. It resembled a thousand volcanoes belching fire. The whole town shook. Austrian guns replied with equal intensity. The Russians advanced in sixteen waves and were mown down and defeated. Hundreds were drowned. Russian columns were continually pushed back from the Pruth beyond Sudagora."

Serious, though, this loss was to the Central Powers, they had one consolation left. Before the fall of Czernowitz the Austro-Hungarian forces were able to withdraw and only about 1,000 men fell into Russian captivity. In one respect then the Russians had not gained their point. The Austrian army in the Bukowina was still in the field.

Slowly but steadily the force of Von Hindenburg's offensive in the north increased. On the day on which Czernowitz fell attacks were delivered at many points along the 150-mile line be-

tween Dvinsk in the north and Krevo in the south. Some local successes were gained by the Germans, but generally speaking this offensive movement failed in its chief purpose, namely, to lessen the strength of the Russian attack against the Austrian lines.

A more substantial gain was made by the combined German and Austro-Hungarian forces, opposing the Russians west of Lutsk, in order to stop their advance against Kovel. There the Germans drove back the center of General Brussilov's front and captured 3,500 men, 11 officers, some cannon, and 10 machine guns.

On the day of Czernowitz's fall the official English newspaper representative with the Russian armies of General Brussilov secured a highly interesting statement from this Russian general who, by his remarkable success, had so suddenly become one of the most famous figures of the great war.

"The sweeping successes attained by my armies are not the product of chance, or of Austrian weakness, but represent the application of all the lessons which we have learned in two years of bitter warfare against the Germans. In every movement, great or small, that we have made this winter, we have been studying the best methods of handling the new problems which modern warfare presents.

"At the beginning of the war, and especially last summer, we lacked the preparations which the Germans have been making for the past fifty years. Personally I was not discouraged, for my faith in Russian troops and Russian character is an enduring one. I was convinced that, given the munitions, we should do exactly as we have done in the past two weeks.

"The main element of our success was due to the absolute coordination of all the armies involved and the carefully planned harmony with which the various branches of the service supported each other.

"On our entire front the attack began at the same hour and it was impossible for the enemy to shift his troops from one quarter to another, as our attacks were being pressed equally at all points.



"The most important fighting has been in the sector between Rovno, and here we have made our greatest advances, which are striking more seriously at the strategy of the whole enemy front in the east.

"If we are able to take Kovel there is reason to believe that the whole eastern front will be obliged to fall back, as Kovel represents a railway center which has been extraordinarily useful for the intercommunications of the Germans and Austrians.

"That this menace is fully realized by the enemy is obvious from the fact that the Germans are supporting this sector with all the available troops that can be rushed up. Some are coming from the west and some from points on the eastern front to the north of us.

"In all of this fighting the Russian infantry has proved itself superb, with a morale which is superior even to that of 1914, when we were sweeping through Galicia for the first time. This is largely due to the fact that the army now represents the feeling of the whole people of Russia, who are united in their desire to carry the war to its final and successful conclusion."

To the question how he had been able to make such huge captures of prisoners the Russian general replied:

"The nature of modern trenches, which makes them with their deep tunnels and maze of communications, so difficult to destroy, renders them a menace to their own defenders once their position is taken in rear or flank, for it is impossible to escape quickly from these elaborate networks of defenses.

"Besides, we have for the first time had sufficient ammunition to enable us to use curtain fire for preventing the enemy from retiring from his positions, save through a scathing zone of shrapnel fire, which renders surrender imperative."

## CHAPTER XIV

## IN CONQUERED EAST GALICIA

ANOTHER very interesting account of conditions along the southeastern front can be found in a letter from the Petrograd correspondent of a London daily newspaper, who spent considerable time in Tarnopol, a city which had been in the hands of the Russians ever since the early part of the war:

"We are in Austria here, but no one who was plumped down into Tarnopol, say from an aeroplane, would ever guess it. Not only are the streets full of Russian soldiers: all the names on the shop fronts are in Russian characters. The hotels have changed their styles and titles. The notices posted up in public places are Russian. Everywhere Russian (of a kind) is talked. German, the official language of Austria, is neither heard nor seen.

"It is true that this part of Galicia has been in the possession of Russia since the early days of the war. Even so, it is a surprise to find a population so accommodating.

"The people in this part of Austria are Poles, Ruthenes and Jews. Polish belongs to the same family of languages as Russian, and the Poles are Slavs. So are the Ruthenes, whose speech is almost identical with that of southwestern Russia. They are very like the 'Little' Russians, so called to distinguish them from the people of 'Great' Russia on the north. They live in the same neat, thatched and whitewashed cottages. They have the same gayly colored national costumes still in wear, and the same fairy tales, the same merry lilting songs, so different from the melancholy strains of northern folk music. Almost the same religion.

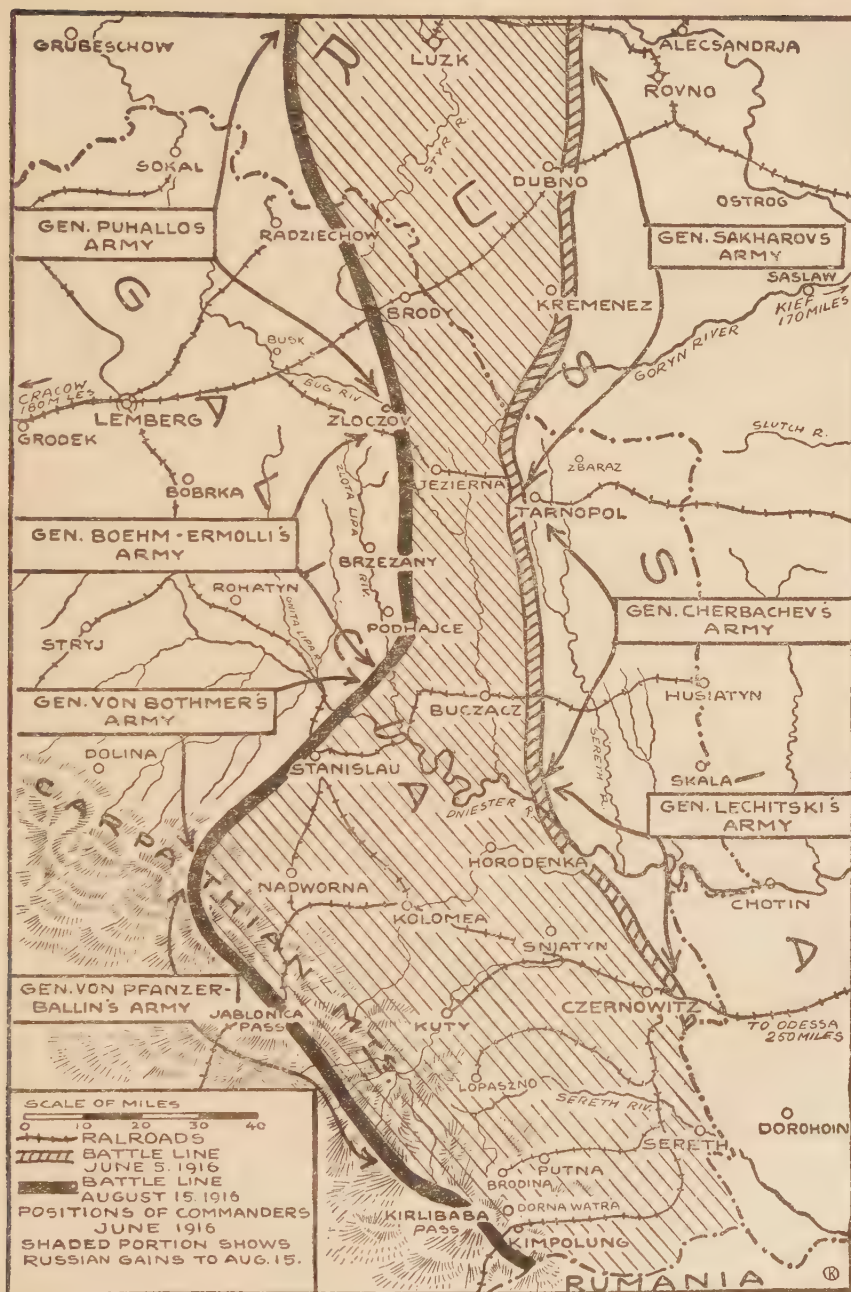
"The finest churches in Tarnopol belong to the Poles, who are Roman Catholics. The Russian soldiers, many of them, seem to find the Roman mass quite as comforting as their Orthodox rite. They stand and listen to it humbly, crossing themselves in eastern fashion, only caring to know that God is being wor-

shipped in more or less the same fashion as that to which they are accustomed. But in the Ruthenian churches they find exactly the same ritual as their own. With their blood relations they are upon family terms. There was an interesting exhibition in Petrograd last year illustrating the Russian racial traits in the Ruthenian population. Down here one recognizes these at once.

"No clearer proof could be found of the gentle, kindly character of the Russians than the attitude toward them of the Austrian Slavs generally. At a point close to the firing line, early this morning, I saw three Austrian prisoners who had been 'captured' during the night. They had, in point of fact, given themselves up. They were Serbs from Bosnia, and they were quite happy to be in Russian hands. I saw them again later in the day on their way to the rear, sitting by the roadside smoking cigarettes which their escort had given them. Captives and guardians were on the best of terms.

"The only official evidences of occupation which I noticed are notices announcing that restaurants and cafés close at 11, and that there must be no loud talking or playing of instruments in hotels after 10—an edict for which I feel profoundly grateful. Signs of peaceful penetration are to be found everywhere. The samovar (urn for making tea) has become an institution in Galician hotels. The main street is pervaded by small boys selling Russian newspapers or making a good thing out of cleaning the high Russian military 'sapogee' (top boots). They get five cents for a penny paper and ninepence or a shilling for boot-blackening, but considering the mud of Galicia (I have been up to my boot tops—that is, up to my knees—in it), the charge is not too heavy, especially if the unusual dearth of living be taken into account.

"Very gay this main street is of an afternoon, crowded with officers, who come in from the trenches to enjoy life. A very pleasant lot of young fellows they are, and very easily pleased. One I met invited me to midday tea in his bombproof shelter in a forward trench. I accepted gratefully and found him a charmingly gay host. He took a childlike pleasure in showing me all



THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE IN GALICIA



the conveniences he had fitted up, and kept on saying, 'Ah, how comfortable and peaceful it is here,' with the sound of rifle shots and hand grenade and mine explosions in our ears all the time.

"From highest to lowest, almost all the Russian officers I have met are friendly and unassuming. The younger ones are delightful. There is no drink to be had here, and therefore no foolish, tipsy loudness or quarreling among them."

On June 18, 1916, further progress and additional large captures of Austro-Hungarian and German prisoners were reported by the Russian armies fighting in Volhynia, Galicia, and the Bukowina. However, both the amount of ground gained and the number of prisoners taken were very much slighter than had been the case during the earlier part of the Russian offensive. This was due to the fact that the armies of the Central Powers had received strong reenforcements and had apparently succeeded in strengthening their new positions and in stiffening their resistance. Powerful counterattacks were launched at many points.

One of these, according to the Russian official statement, was of special vigor. It was directed against General Brussilov's armies which were attempting to advance toward Lemberg, in the region of the village of Rogovitz to the southwest of Lokatchi, about four miles to the south of the main road from Lutsk to Vladimir-Volynski. There the Austro-Hungarian forces in large numbers attacked in massed formation and succeeded in breaking through the Russian front, capturing three guns after all the men and officers in charge of them had been killed. The Russians, however, brought up strong reenforcements and made it necessary for the Austro-Hungarians to withdraw, capturing at the same time some hundred prisoners, one cannon, and two machine guns.

At another point of this sector in the region of Korytynitzky, southeast of Svinoukhi, a Russian regiment, strongly supported by machine-gun batteries, inflicted heavy losses on the Austro-Hungarian troops and captured four officers, a hundred soldiers, and four machine guns.

South of this region, just to the east of Borohoff, a desperate fight developed for the possession of a dense wood near the village of Bojeff, which, after the most furious resistance, had to be cleared finally by the Austro-Hungarian forces, which, during this engagement, suffered large losses in killed and wounded, and furthermore lost one thousand prisoners and four machine guns.

At still another point on this part of the front, just south of Radziviloff, a Russian attack was resisted most vigorously and heavy losses were inflicted on the attacking regiments. Here, as well as in other places, the Austro-Hungarian-German forces employed all possible means to stem the Russian onrush, and a large part of the losses suffered by General Brussilov's regiments was due to the extensive use of liquid fire.

The troops of General Lechitsky's command, after the occupation of Czernowitz, crossed the river Pruth at many points and came frequently in close touch with the rear guard of the retreating Austro-Hungarian army. During the process of these engagements, about fifty officers and more than fifteen hundred men, as well as ten guns, were captured. Near Koutchournare, four hundred more men and some guns of heavy caliber, as well as large amounts of munitions fell into the hands of the Russian forces. The latter claimed also at this point the capture of immense amounts of provisions and forage, loaded on almost one thousand wagons. At various other points west and north of Czernowitz, large quantities of engineering material had to be left behind at railroad stations by the retreating Austro-Hungarian army and thus easily became the booty of the victorious Russians.

Farther to the north, along the Styr, to the west of Kolki, in the region of the Kovel-Rovno Railway, General von Linsingen's Austro-German army group successfully resisted Russian attacks at some points, launched strong counterattacks at other points, but had to fall back before superior Russian forces at still other points.

In the northern sector of the eastern front, along the Dvina, activity was restricted to extensive artillery duels during this day.

## CHAPTER XV

THE GERMAN COUNTEROFFENSIVE  
BEFORE KOVEL

AN extensive offensive movement was developed on June 19, 1916, by General von Linsingen. The object of this movement apparently was not only to secure the safety of Kovel, but also to threaten General Brussilov's army by an enveloping movement which, if it had succeeded, would not only have pushed the Russian center back beyond Lutsk and even possibly Dubno, but would also have exposed the entire Russian forces, fighting in Galicia and the Bukowina, to the danger of being cut off from the troops battling in Volhynia. This movement developed in the triangle formed by the Kovel-Rafalovka railroad in the north, the Kovel-Rozishtchy railroad in the south, and the Styr River between these two places. The severest fighting in this sector occurred along the Styr between Kolki and Sokal.

On the other hand Russians scored a decided success in the southern corner of the Bukowina where a crossing of the Sereth River was successfully negotiated.

Artillery duels again were fought along the Dvina front as well as along the Dvina-Vilia sector. In the latter region a number of engagements took place south of Smorgon, near Kary and Tanoczyn, where German troops captured some hundreds of Russians as well as four machine guns and four mine throwers. A Russian aeroplane was compelled to land west of Kolodont, south of Lake Narotch, while German aeroplanes successfully bombarded the railroad station at Vileika on the Molodetchna-Polotsk railway.

With ever increasing fury the battle raged along the Styr River on the following day, June 20, 1916. Both sides won local successes at various points, but the outstanding feature of that day's fighting was the fact that in spite of the most heroic efforts the Russian troops were unable to advance any farther toward Kovel. Ten miles west of Kolki the Russians succeeded in cross-

of Gruziatin, two miles north of Godomitchy, the small German garrison of which, consisting of some five hundred officers and men, fell into Russian captivity. Only a short time later, on the same day, heavy German batteries concentrated such a furious fire on the Russian troops occupying the village that they had to withdraw and permit the Germans once more to occupy Gruziatin. How furious the fighting in this one small section must have been that day may readily be seen from the fact that the German official statement claimed a total of over twenty thousand men to have been lost by the Russians.

Hardly less severe was the fighting which developed along the Stokhod River. This is a southern tributary of the Pripet River, joining it about thirty miles west of the mouth of the Styr. It is cut by both the Kovel-Rovno and the Kovel-Rafalovka railways, and forms a strong natural line of defense west of Kovel. In spite of the most desperate efforts on the part of large Russian forces to cross this river, near the village of Vorontchin northeast of Kieslin, the German resistance was so tenacious that the Russians were unable to make any progress. Large numbers of guns of all calibers had been massed here and inflicted heavy losses to the czar's regiments. Another furious engagement in this region occurred during the night near the village of Rayniesto on the Stokhod River.

To the north heavy fighting again developed south of Smorgon, where, with the coming of night, the Germans directed a very intense bombardment against the Russian lines. Again and again this was followed up with infantry attacks, which in some instances resulted in the penetrating of the Russian trenches, while in others it led to sanguinary hand-to-hand fighting. However, the Russian batteries likewise hurled their death-dealing missiles in large numbers and exacted a terrific toll from the ranks of the attacking Germans. Along the balance of the northern half of the front a serious artillery duel again was fought, which was especially intense in the region of the Uxkull bridgehead, in the northern sector of the Jacobstadt positions and along the Oginsky Canal.

German aeroplane squadrons repeated their activity of the



day before and successfully bombarded the railroad stations at Vileika, Molodetchna, and Zalyessie.

The well-known English journalist, Mr. Stanley Washburn, acted at this time as special correspondent of the London "Times" at Russian headquarters and naturally had exceptional opportunities for observing conditions at the front. Some of his descriptions of the territory across which the Russians' advance was carried out, as well as of actual fighting which he observed at close quarters, therefore, give us a most vivid picture of the difficulties under which the Russian victories were achieved and of the tenacity and courage which the Austro-German troops showed in their resistance.

Of the Volhynian fortress of Lutsk, as it appeared in the second half of June, 1916, he says:

"This town to-day is a veritable maelstrom of war. From not many miles away, by night and by day, comes an almost uninterrupted roar of heavy gunfire, and all day long the main street is filled with the rumble and clatter of caissons, guns, and transports going forward on one side, while on the other side is an unending line of empty caissons returning, mingled with wounded coming back in every conceivable form of vehicle, and in among these at breakneck speed dart motorcycles carrying dispatches from the front.

"The weather is dry and hot, and the lines of the road are visible for miles by the clouds of dust from the plodding feet of the soldiery and the transport. As the retreat from Warsaw was a review of the Russian armies in reverse, so is Lutsk to-day a similar spectacle of the Muscovite armies advancing; but now all filled with high hopes and their morale is at the highest pitch.

"Along the entire front the contending armies are locked in a fierce, ceaseless struggle. No hour of the day passes when there is not somewhere an attack or a counterattack going forward with a bitterness and ferocity unknown since the beginning of the war. The troops coming from Germany are rendering the Russian advance difficult, and the general nature of the fighting is defense by vigorous counterattacks."

Of the fighting along the Kovel front he says: "The story of the fighting on the Kovel front is a narrative of a heroic advance which at the point of the bayonet steadily forced back through barrier after barrier the stubborn resistance of the Austrians, intermingled occasionally with German units, till at one point the advance measured forty-eight miles.

"After two days spent on the front I can state without any reservation that I believe that the Russians are engaged in the fiercest and most courageous fight of their entire war, hanging on to their hardly won positions and often facing troops concentrated on the strategic points of the line outnumbering them sometimes by three to one.

"I spent Thursday at an advanced position on the Styr, where the Russian troops earlier forced a crossing of the river, facing a terrific fire, and turning the enemy out of his positions at the point of the bayonet. In hurriedly dug positions offering the most meager kind of shelter, the Russians in one morning drove back four consecutive Austrian counterattacks. Each left the field thickly studded with Austrian dead, besides hundreds of their wounded who had been left.

"From an observation point in the village I studied the ground of the day's fighting, and though familiar with Russian courage and tenacity, I found it difficult to realize that human beings had been able to carry the positions which the Russians carried here.

"I was obliged to curtail my study of the enemy's lines and of the position on account of the extremely local artillery fire, the shells endeavoring to locate our observation point, which was evidently approximately known. At any rate, two shells bursting over us and one narrowly missing our waiting carriage, besides three others falling in the mud almost at our feet, prompted our withdrawal. Fortunately the last three had fallen in the mud and did not explode.

"Along this front the Russians are holding against heavy odds, but they are certainly inflicting greater losses than they are receiving.

"The next day I spent at the Corps and Divisional Headquarters west of the Kovel road. The forward units of this corps

represent the maximum point of our advance, and the Russians' most vital menace to the enemy, as is obvious from the numbers of Germans who are attacking here in dense masses, without so far seriously impairing the Russian resistance.

"After spending three days on this front motoring hundreds of versts, and inspecting the positions taken by the Russians, their achievement becomes increasingly impressive. The first line taken which I have inspected represents the latest practice in field works, in many ways comparing with the lines which I saw on the French front. The front line is protected by five or six series of barbed wire, with heavy front line trenches, studded with redoubts, machine-gun positions, and underground shelters twenty feet deep, while the reserve positions extend in many places from half a mile to a mile in series behind the first line, studded with communication trenches, shelters, and bomb-proofs.

"It must not be thought that the Austrians offered only a feeble resistance, for I inspected one series of trenches where, I was informed, the Russians in a few versts of front buried 4,000 Austrian dead on the first lines alone. This indicates the nature and tenacity of the enemy resistance. I am told also that far fewer Slavs and Poles have been found among the Austrians than in any other big action. It is believed that most of these have been sent to the Italian front on account of their tendency to surrender to the Russians.

"Another interesting point about their advance is the fact that the Russians practically in no place used guns of the heaviest caliber, and that the preliminary artillery fire in no place lasted above thirty hours, and in many places not more than twelve hours.

"Last summer's experience is not forgotten by the Russians and there has probably been the most economic use of ammunition on any of the fronts in this war commensurate with the results during these advances. Rarely was a hurricane fire directed on any positions preceding an assault, but the artillery checked each shell and its target, which was rendered possible by the nearness of our front lines.

"In this way avenues were cut through the barbed wire at frequent intervals along the line through which the attacks were pressed home and the flanking trenches and the labyrinths were taken in the rear or on the flanks before the Austrians were able to effect their escape. The line once broken was moved steadily forward, taking Lutsk six days after the first attack, and one division reaching its maximum advance of forty-eight miles just ten days after the first offensive movement."

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## CHAPTER XVI

### PROGRESS OF THE BUKOWINIAN CONQUEST

ON June 21, 1916, the Russians gained another important victory by the capture of the city of Radautz, in the southern Bukowina, eleven miles southwest of the Sereth River, and less than ten miles west of the Rumanian frontier. This river Sereth must not be confused with a river of the same name further to the north in Galicia. The latter is a tributary of the Dniester, while the Bukowinian Sereth is a tributary of the Danube, which latter it joins near the city of Galatz, in Rumania, after flowing in a southeasterly direction through this country for almost two hundred miles.

The fall of Radautz was an important success for various reasons. In the first place, it brought the Russian advance that much nearer to the Carpathian Mountains. In the second place, it gave the invading armies full control of an important railway running in a northwesterly direction through the Bukowina. This railway was of special importance, because it is the northern continuation of one of the principal railroad lines of Rumania which, during its course in the latter country, runs along the west bank of the Sereth River.

In Galicia, General von Bothmer's army successfully resisted strong Russian attacks along the Hajvoronka-Bobulinze line, north of Przewloka.



Without cessation the furious fighting in the Kolki-Sokal sector on the Styr River continued. There General von Linsingen's German reinforcements had strengthened the Austro-Hungarian resistance to such an extent that it held against all Russian attempts to break through their line in their advance toward Kovel.

The same condition existed on the Sokal-Linievka line, where the Russian forces had been trying for the best part of a week to force a crossing of the Stokhod River, the only natural obstacle between them and Kovel. Further south, west of Lutsk, from the southern sector of the Turiya River down to the Galician border near the town of Gorochoff, the Teutonic forces likewise succeeded in resisting the Russian advance. This increased resistance of the Teutonic forces found expression, also, in a considerable decrease in the number of prisoners taken by the Russians.

Along the northern half of the front, Field Marshal von Hindenburg renewed his attacks south of Dvinsk. South of Lake Vishnieff, near Dubatovka, German troops, after intense artillery preparation, stormed a portion of the Russian trenches, but could not maintain their new positions against repeated ferocious counterattacks carried out by Russian reinforcements. Near Krevo, the Germans forced a crossing over the River Krevlianka, but were again thrown back to its west bank by valiant Russian artillery attacks.

The Russian advance in the Bukowina progressed rapidly on June 22, 1916. Three important railroad towns fell into their hands, on that day, of the left wing of the Russian army, Gurahumora in the south, Straza in the center, and Vidnitz in the northwest. Gurahumora lies fifty miles south of Czernowitz, and is situated on the only railway in the southern part of the crownland. The town is ten miles from the Russian border. Straza lies a few miles east of the western terminal of the Radautz-Frasin railway. Its fall indicates a Russian advance of eighteen miles since the capture of Radautz. Vidnitz is on the Galician border, a few miles south of Kutý, and twenty-five miles southwest of Czernowitz.

In spite of these successes, however, it became clear by this time that the Russian attempt to cut off the Austrian army fighting in the Bukowina had miscarried. Each day yielded a smaller number of prisoners than the preceding day. The main part of the Austro-Hungarian forces had safely reached the foothills of the Carpathians, while other parts farther to the north had succeeded in joining the army of General von Bothmer.

In Galicia and Volhynia the Teutonic forces continued to resist successfully all Russian attempts to advance, even though there was not the slightest let-up in the violence of the Russian attack.

Along many other points of the front, more or less important engagements took place, especially so along the Oginsky Canal, where the Russians suffered heavy losses. Von Hindenburg's troops in the north also were active again, both in the Lake district south of Dvinsk, and along the Dvina sector from Dvinsk to Riga.

Once more a Russian success was reported in the Bukowina on June 23, 1916. West of Sniatyn the Russian troops advanced to the Rybnitz River, occupying the heights along its banks. Still further west, about twenty miles south of the Pruth River, the town of Kutý, well up in the Carpathian Mountains, was captured. Kutý is about forty miles west of Czernowitz, just across the Galician border and only twenty miles almost due south from the important railroad center Kolomea, itself about one-third the distance from Czernowitz to Lemberg on the main railway between these two cities.

A slight success was also gained on the Rovno-Dubno-Brody-Lemberg railway. A few miles northeast of Brody, just east of the Galician-Russian border, near the village of Radziviloff, Russian troops gained a footing in the Austro-Hungarian trenches and captured a few hundred prisoners. Later that day, however, a concentrated artillery bombardment forced them to give up this advantage and to retire to their own trenches.

In Volhynia the German counterattacks against General Brusilov's army extended now along the front of almost eighty miles, stretching from Kolki on the Styr River to within a few

miles of the Galician border near Gorochoff. Along part of this line, General von Linsingen's forces advanced on June 23, 1916, to and beyond the line of Zubilno-Vatyn-Zvinatze, and repulsed a series of most fierce counterattacks launched by the Russians which caused the latter serious losses in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The country covered by these engagements is extremely difficult, impeded by woods and swamps, and a great deal of the fighting, therefore, was at close quarters, especially so near the town of Tortchyn, about fifteen miles due west of Lutsk. Other equally severe engagements occurred near Zubilno and southeast of Sviniusky, near the village of Pustonyty.

In the north, the Russians took the offensive in the region of Illuxt, on the Dvina, and in the region of Vidzy, north of the Disna River. Although successful in some places, the German resistance was strong enough to prevent any material gain. German aeroplanes attacked and bombarded the railway stations at Kolozany, southwest of Molodetchna, and of Puniniezy.

West of Sniatyn, Russian troops, fighting as they advanced, occupied the villages of Kilikhoff and Toulukhoff on June 24, 1916.

Late on the preceding evening, June 23, 1916, the town of Kimpolung was taken after intense fighting. Sixty officers and 2,000 men were made prisoners and seven machine guns were captured. In the railway station whole trains were captured.

With the capture of the towns of Kimpolung, Kutzy and Viznic, the whole Bukowina was now in the hands of the Russians. So hurried had been the retirement of the Austro-Hungarian forces that they left behind eighty-eight empty wagons, seventeen wagons of maize, and about 2,500 tons of anthracite, besides structural material, great reserves of fodder and other material.

On the Styr, two miles south of Smyny, in the region of Czartorysk, the Russians, by a sudden attack, took the redoubt of a fort whose garrison, after a stubborn resistance, were all put to the bayonet.

North of the village of Zatouritzky, the German-Austrian forces assumed the offensive, but were pushed back by a counter-attack, both sides suffering heavily in the hand-grenade fighting.

North of Poustomyty, southeast of Sviusky (southwest of Lutsk), the Germans attacked Russian lines, but were received by concentrated fire, and penetrated as far as the Russian trenches in only a few points, where the trenches had been virtually destroyed by the preparatory artillery fire.

German artillery violently bombarded numerous sectors of the Riga positions. A strong party of Germans attempted to approach Russian trenches near the western extremity of Lake Babit, but without result.

On the Dvina, between Jacobstadt and Dvinsk, German artillery was also violently active. German aeroplanes dropped twenty bombs on the station at Polochany southwest of Molo-detchna.

On June 25, 1916, there was again intense artillery fire in many sectors in the regions of Jacobstadt and Dvinsk.

Along the balance of the front many stubborn engagements were fought between comparatively small detachments. Thus for instance, in the region east of Horedyshchy north of Baranovitchy, after a violent bombardment of the Russian trenches near the Scroboff farm on Sunday night, the German troops took the offensive, but were repulsed. At the same time, on the road to Slutsk, a German attempt to approach the Russian trenches on the Shara River was repulsed by heavy fire.

In the region northwest of Lake Vygonovskoye, at noon the Germans attacked the farm situated five versts southwest of Lipsk. At first they were repulsed; but nevertheless they renewed the attack afterward on a greatly extended front under cover of heavy and light artillery.

Especially heavy fighting again developed along the Kovel sector of the Styr front. From Kolki to Sokal the Germans bombarded the Russian trenches with heavy artillery and made many local attacks, most of which were successfully repulsed.

Repeated attacks in mass formation in the region of Linievka on the Stokhod, resulted also in some successes to the German troops. West of Sokal they stormed Russian positions over a length of some 3,000 meters and repulsed all counterattacks.



On the reaches of the Dniester, south of Buczacz, Don Cosacks, having crossed the river fighting and overthrowing elements of the Austro-Hungarian advance guards, occupied the villages of Siekerghine and Petruve, capturing five officers and 350 men. Russian cavalry, after a fight, occupied positions near Pezoritt, a few miles west of Kimpolung.

Additional large depots of wood and thirty-one abandoned wagons were captured at Molit and Frumos stations on the Gurahumora-Rascka railway.

On the other hand the number of prisoners and the amount of booty taken by General von Linsingen's army alone in Volhynia since June 16, 1916, increased to sixty-one officers, 11,097 men, two cannon and fifty-four guns.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### TEMPORARY LULL IN THE RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE

SO strong had the combined Austro-Hungarian-German resistance become by this time, that by June 26, 1916, the Russian advance seemed to have been halted all along the line. The resistance had stiffened, especially in front of Kovel, where the Central Powers seemed to have assembled their strongest forces and were not only successful in keeping the Russians from reaching Kovel but even regained some of the ground lost in Volhynia.

Southwest of Sokal they stormed Russian lines and took several hundred prisoners. Russian counterattacks were nowhere successful. This was especially due to the fact that both on the Kolki front and on the middle Strypa the Germans bombarded all Russian positions with heavy guns.

To the north of Kutý and west of Novo Posaive Russian attacks were repulsed likewise with heavy losses.

The fighting in the north, along the Dvina front and south of Dvinsk in the lake district, had settled down to a series of local

engagements between small detachments and to artillery duels. German detachments which penetrated Russian positions south of Kekkau brought back twenty-six prisoners, one machine gun and one mine thrower. Another detachment which entered Russian positions brought back north of Miadziol one officer, 188 men, six machine guns and four mine throwers. Numerous bombs were again dropped on the railway freight station at Dvinsk. In the Baltic, however, three Russian hydroplanes in the Irben Strait engaged four German machines, bringing down one. On the Riga front and near Uxkull bridgehead there was an artillery duel. Against the Dvinsk positions, too, the Germans opened a violent artillery fire at different points, and attempted to take the offensive north of Lake Sventen, but without success.

In the region north of Lake Miadziol, south of Dvinsk, the Germans bombarded with heavy and light artillery Russian trenches between lakes Dolja and Voltchino. They then started an offensive which was stopped by heavy artillery fire. A second German offensive also failed, the attacking troops being again driven back to their own trenches.

In the region of the Slutsk road, southeast of Baranovitchy, the Germans after a short artillery preparation attempted to take the offensive, but were repulsed by heavy fire.

The Germans also resumed the offensive in the vicinity of a farm southwest of Lipsk, northeast of Lake Vygonovskoe, and succeeded in reaching the east bank of the Shara, but soon afterward were dislodged from it and fell back.

The Russian official statement of that day, June 26, 1916, announced that General Brussilov had captured between June 4th and 23d, 4,413 officers and doctors, 194,941 men, 219 guns, 644 machine guns and 195 bomb throwers.

Again, during the night of June 26, 1916, southeast of Riga, the Germans, after bombarding the Russian positions and emitting clouds of gas, attacked in great force in the direction of Pulkarn. Reenforcements, having been brought up quickly by the Russians, they succeeded with the assistance of their artillery, in repulsing the Germans, who suffered heavy losses.

On the Dvina and in the Jacobstadt region there was an artillery and rifle duel. German aeroplanes were making frequent raids on the Russian lines. They dropped sixty-eight bombs during a nocturnal raid on the town of Dvinsk on June 27, 1916. The damage both to property and life was considerable.

An attempt on the part of German troops to take the offensive south of Krevo was repulsed by gunfire. On the rest of the front as far as the region of the Pripet Marshes there was an exchange of fire.

On the same day General von Linsingen's forces stormed and captured the village of Linievka, west of Sokal and about three miles east of the Svidniki bridgehead on the Stokhod, and the Russian positions south of it. West of Torchin, near the apex of the Lutsk salient, a strong Russian attack collapsed under German artillery and infantry fire.

In Galicia, southwest of Novo Pochaieff, east of Brody, Austro-Hungarian outposts repulsed five Russian night attacks.

Gradually the Russians were closing in on the important position of Kolomea, near the northern Bukowina border. On the east they were only twelve miles off, on the north they had crossed the Dniester twenty-four miles away, and in a few days they reported having driven the Austrians across a river thirteen miles to the southeast, while at Kutu, twenty miles almost due south, one attack followed another.

On the following day, June 28, 1916, strong offensive movements again developed both in East Galicia and in Volhynia. In the former region the Russians were the aggressors; in the latter, the Germans.

In East Galicia General Lechitsky, commander of Brussilov's center, began a mighty onrush against the Austro-Hungarian lines, between the Dniester and the region around Kutu, in an effort to push his opponents beyond the important railway city of Kolomea, strategically the most valuable point of southern Galicia.

He succeeded in inflicting a crushing defeat upon the Austro-Hungarians, taking three lines of trenches and 10,506 prisoners. This success was achieved in the northern part of the area of

attack, between the Dniester and the region around the Pruth. The fall of Kolomea looked inevitable because of this new advance.

Persistent fighting took place on the line of the River Tchertovetz, a tributary of the Pruth, and also in the region of the town of Kutý. Both sides again suffered heavy losses at these points.

East of Kolomea the Russians again attacked in massed formations on a front of twenty-five miles. At numerous points, at a great sacrifice, Russian reserves were thrown against the Austrian lines, and succeeded in advancing in hand-to-hand fighting, but during the evening were forced to evacuate a portion of their front near Kolomea and to the south. On the Dniester line superior Russian forces were repulsed north of Obertyn. All Russian attempts to dislodge the Austrians west of Novo Peczaje failed. At many other points in Galicia and the Bukowina there were artillery duels.

In Volhynia, especially in the region of Linievka, and at other points on the Stokhod, the desperate fighting which had been in progress for quite a few days continued without abatement.

Russian attacks made by some companies between Dubatowska and Smorgon failed in the face of terrific German fire.

Near Guessitschi, southeast of Ljubtscha, a German division stormed an enemy point of support east of the Niemen, taking some prisoners and capturing two machine guns and two mine throwers.

On the Dvina front German artillery bombarded the region of Sakowitche, Seltze and Bogouschinsk Wood, northwest of Krevo. Strong forces then proceeded to attack, but were repulsed by Russian machine guns and infantry fire.

On June 29, 1916, the fighting northwest of Kutý continued. As a result of pressure on the part of the superior forces of the Russians the Austro-Hungarians were forced to withdraw their lines west and southwest of Kolomea. The town of Obertyn was taken after a stubborn fight, as well as villages in the neighborhood, north and south. In the region south of the Dniester, the Russians were pursuing the Austrians, who were forced to leave behind a large number of convoys and military material.



Near the village of Solivine, between the rivers Stokhod and Styl, to the west of Sokal, the Germans attempted to take the offensive. Their attack was repulsed, but an artillery duel continued until late in the day.

In the morning German aviators dropped thirty bombs on Lutsk. Light and heavy German artillery opened a violent fire on the Russian trenches in the Niemen sector, northeast of Novo Grodek. Under cover of this fire German forces crossed the Niemen and occupied the woods east of the village of Guessitschi.

On the Dvina front German artillery bombarded Russian positions southeast of Riga and the bridgehead above Uxkull. North of Illuxt the Germans attempted to move forward, but were thrown back by Russian gunfire.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### ADVANCE AGAINST LEMBERG AND KOVEL

LATE that day, June 29, 1916, General Lechitsky captured Kolomea, the important railway junction for the possession of which the battle had been raging furiously for days past. This was a severe blow to the Central Powers. It meant a serious danger to the remainder of General Pflanzer's army and likewise threatened the safety of General von Bothmer's forces to the north.

Still the Russian advances continued. On the last day of June their left wing drove back the retreating Austro-Hungarians over a front situated south of the Dniester and occupied many places south of Kolomea.

Northwest of Kolomea, Russian troops, after a violent engagement, drove back their opponents in the direction of the heights near the village of Brezova, and as the result of a brilliant attack, took part of the heights.

The number of prisoners taken by General Lechitsky during the last days of June, 1916, was 305 officers and 14,574 men.

Four guns and thirty machine guns were captured. The total number of prisoners taken from June 4 to June 30, 1916, inclusive, was claimed to have reached the immense total of 217,000 officers and men.

During June, in the region south of Griciaty, 158 officers and 2,307 men, as well as cannon and nineteen machine guns, fell into the hands of the Central Powers.

In the region of the Lipa Austrian artillery continued to bombard the Russian front with heavy artillery and field artillery. Desperate attacks made by newly arrived German troops were, however, repulsed with heavy losses to the attacking forces.

Near Thumacz an attack of cavalry, who charged six deep along a front of three kilometers, was successfully repulsed by Austro-Hungarian troops.

German forces drove back Russian troops south of Ugrinow, west of Tortschin, and near Sokal.

At other points on the Kovel front engagements likewise took place, though the violence of the combat had somewhat abated.

West of Kolki, southwest of Sokal, and near Viczny, German forces conquered Russian positions. West and southwest of Lutsk various local engagements occurred. Here the Russians on June 30, 1916, lost fifteen officers, 1,365 men; since June 16th, twenty-six officers, 3,165 men.

The next objective of General Lechitsky's army was Stanislau, about thirty miles farther northwest than Kolomea, on the Czernovitz-Lemberg railway. On July 1, 1916, in the region west of Kolomea, the army of General Lechitsky, after intense fighting, took by storm some strong Austrian positions and captured some 2,000 men.

Further north, German and Austro-Hungarian troops of General von Bothmer's army stormed the hill of Vorobijowka, a height southwest of Tarnopol, which had been occupied by the Russians, and took seven officers and 891 men. Seven machine guns and two mine throwers were captured.

On the Volhynia front the German troops continued to deliver desperate attacks against some sectors between the Styr and Stokhod and south of the Stokhod.

In the afternoon German artillery produced gusts of fire in the region of Koptchie, Ghelenovka and Zabary, southwest of Sokal. An energetic attack then followed, but was repulsed. Southwest of Kiselin Russian fire stopped an offensive. At the village of Seniawa and in the same region near the village of Seublino there was a warm engagement. A series of fresh German attacks southwest of Kiselin-Zubilno-Kochey was repulsed. The German columns were put to flight with heavy losses. The fugitives were killed in large numbers, but, reenforced by reserves, the attacks were promptly renewed, without, however, meeting with much success.

South of the village of Zaturze, near the village of Koscheff, Russian forces stopped an Austrian offensive by a counteroffensive. Austrian attempts to cross the River Shara southwest of Lipsk and south of Baranovitchy were likewise repulsed.

On July 2, 1916, Russian torpedo boats bombarded the Courland coast east of Raggazem without result. They were attacked effectively by German coastal batteries and by aeroplanes.

At many points along the front of Field Marshal von Hindenburg the Russians increased their fire, and repeatedly undertook advances. These led to fighting within the German lines near Niki, north of Smorgon. The Russians were ejected with losses.

On the front of Prince Leopold the Russians attacked north-east and east of Gorodische and on both sides of the Baranovitchy railway, after artillery preparation lasting four hours.

Farther south fierce battles occurred between the Styr and the Stokhod and to the south of these rivers. On the Koptche-Ghelenovka-Zobary front, after gusts of gunfire, the Germans left their trenches and opened an assault upon the Russian line. Under cover of a bombardment of extreme violence German troops opened an offensive south of Linievka, but were checked. In the region of Zubilno and Zaturze (west of Lutsk) the Austrians took the offensive in massed formation, but were repulsed with heavy losses. East of the village of Ougrinov, midway between Lutsk and Gorochoff, fresh German forces held up Russian attacks. At other points on the front of General von Linsingen strong Russian

counterattacks were delivered west and southwest of Lutsk, but failed to stop the German advance. Large cavalry attacks broke down under German fire. The number of prisoners was increased by the Germans by about 1,800. As the result of a week of costly onslaughts by the Austro-German army between the Stokhod and the Styr Rivers in Volhynia, the Russian forces had now been forced back a distance of five miles along the greatest part of the front before Kovel.

In the region of Issakoff, on the right bank of the Dniester, southeast of Nijniff, the Austrians took the offensive in superior numbers. The Russians launched a counteroffensive, which resulted in a fierce fight.

On July 3, 1916, the Russian advance west of Kolomea still continued in this direction. The Austrians were dislodged from several positions, and as a result of this the Russians occupied the village of Potok Tcharny. The booty taken by the Russians here was four cannon and a few hundred prisoners.

Further north in Galicia the army group of General Count von Bothmer, southeast of Thumacz, in a quick advance, forced back the Russians on a front more than twelve and a half miles wide and more than five and a quarter miles deep.

On the Styr-Stokhod front the Russians again threw strong forces, part of them recently brought up to this front, in masses against the German lines to stay their advance, but were repulsed.

An attempt of German troops to cross the Styr in the region of the village of Lipa was repulsed. During the night the Russians captured on this front eleven officers, nearly 1,000 men and five machine guns.

Still farther north, local counterattacks at points where the Russians first succeeded in making some advances, all yielded finally some successes for the Germans, who captured thirteen officers and 1,883 men. Two lines of German works south of Tzirine, northeast of Baranovitchy, however, were pierced by the Russians. In this fighting they captured seventy-two officers, 2,700 men, eleven cannon and several machine guns and bomb throwers.



On the northerly front there was lively artillery fire, which became violent at some points. In the region of the village of Baltaguzy, east of Lake Vichnevskoye the Germans attempted to leave their trenches, but were prevented by Russian fire. A Russian air squadron raided the Baranovitchy railway station.

Once more, on July 4, 1916, the coast of Courland was bombarded fruitlessly from the sea by Russian ships. The operations of the Russian forces against the front of Field Marshal von Hindenburg were continued, especially on both sides of Smorgon. On the Riga-Dvinsk front the artillery duels were growing more intense. Northwest of Goduziesk, Russian troops dislodged German forces from the outskirts of a wood. German aeroplane squadrons dropped bombs freely on the railway.

The Russians recommenced attacking the front from Tzirin to a point southeast of Baranovitchy. Hand-to-hand fights in some places were very stubborn. The Russians were driven out of the sections of the German lines into which they had broken and suffered very heavy losses.

On the lower Styr and on the front between the Styr and Stokhod, and farther south as far as the region of the lower Lipa, everywhere there were fought most desperate engagements.

In the region of Vulka-Galouziskai the Russians broke through wire entanglements fitted with land mines. In a very desperate fight on the Styr west of Kolki the Russians overthrew the Germans and took more than 1,000 prisoners, together with three guns, seventeen machine guns and two searchlights, and several thousand rifles.

In the region north of Zaturse and near Volia Sadovska the Russians seized the first line of enemy trenches, and stopped by artillery fire an enemy attack on Schkline.

In the region of the lower Lipa the Germans made a most stubborn attack without result. At another point the Germans, who crossed the Styr above the mouth of the Lipa, near the village of Peremel, were attacked and driven back to the river.

On the Galician front, in the direction of the Carpathians, there was an artillery action. The left wing of the Russians

continued to press the Austrians back. On the road between Kolomea and Dalatyn the Russians captured the village of Sadzadka at the point of the bayonet.

Southeast of Riga and at many points on the front between Postavy and Vishnieff, further partial attacks by the Russians were repulsed on July 5, 1916. On the Dvina front and the Dvinsk position and further south there were also lively artillery engagements at numerous points. Near Boyare, on the Dvina above Friedrichstadt, Russian light artillery smashed a German light battery. Attempts by the Germans to remove the guns were unsuccessful. The gun team, which endeavored to save one of the guns, was annihilated. All the guns were eventually abandoned.

Extremely fierce fighting, especially in the region east of Worodische and south of Darovo, was everywhere in German favor. The losses of the Russians were very considerable.

In the direction of Baranovitchy the fighting continues, developing to Russian advantage. The Germans delivered repeated counterattacks in order to regain positions captured by the Russians, but each was easily repulsed.

South of the Pinsk Marshes the Russians had important new successes. In the region of Gostioukhovka they captured an entire German battery and took prisoners twenty-two officers and 350 soldiers. Northwest of Baznitchi, on the Styr, north of Kolki, the Russians captured two cannon, three machine guns, and 2,322 prisoners. North of Stegrouziatine they captured German trenches and took more than 300 prisoners and one machine gun. Between the Styr and the Stokhod, west of Sokal and southward, the Germans launched many counterattacks under the protection of artillery.

In Galicia, after intense artillery preparations, the Russians took up an energetic offensive west of the lower Strypa and on the right bank of the Dniester. The Germans were defeated and driven back. The Russian troops were now approaching the Koropice and Souhodolek Rivers, tributaries of the Dniester. They took here nearly 5,000 prisoners and eleven machine guns. On the front of the Barysz sector the defense, after the repulse

of repeated Russian attacks, was partially transferred to the Koropice sector. Russian assaults frequently broke down before the German lines on both sides of Chocimirz, southeast of Tlumach.

Near Sadzadka the Russians with superior forces were successful in penetrating the Austrian positions, who then retreated about five miles to the west, where they formed a new line and repulsed all attacks.

Southwest and northwest of Kolomea the Austrians maintained their positions against all Russian efforts.

Southwest of Buczacz, after heavy fighting at Koropice Brook, the Austrians recaptured their line.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### THE GERMAN STAND ON THE STOKHOD

GENERAL VON LINSINGEN saw himself forced to abandon on July 6, 1916, a corner of the German lines protruding toward Czartorysk on account of the superior pressure on its sides near Kostiukovka and west of Kolki, and new lines of defense were selected along the Stokhod. On both sides of Sokal, Russian attacks broke down with heavy losses. West and southwest of Lutsk the situation remained unchanged that day.

Against the front of Field Marshal von Hindenburg, the Russians continued their operations. They attacked with strong forces south of Lake Narotch, but after fierce fighting were repulsed. Northeast of Smorgon and at other points they were easily repulsed.

The fighting in the vicinity of Kolomea was extended. A strong Russian advance west of the town was checked by a counterattack. Southeast of Tlumach German and Austro-Hungarian troops broke up with artillery and infantry fire an attack over a front of one and a half kilometers by a large force of Russian cavalry.

The number of prisoners the Russians took on July 4 and 5, 1916, during the fighting which still continued on west of the line of the Styr and below the town of Kolki, totals more than 300 officers and 7,415 men, mostly unwounded. The Russians also captured six guns, twenty-three machine guns, two search-lights, several thousand rifles, eleven bomb throwers, and seventy-three ammunition lights.

The Russians repulsed violent German attacks near Gruziatyn. On the right bank of the Dniester, in the region of Jidatcheff and Hotzizrz, there also was desperate fighting.

There was a lively artillery duel in many sectors of the front north of the Pinsk Marshes. East of Baranovitchy, the Austro-Hungarian forces launched several desperate counterattacks which were repulsed by the Russians. Several times the Austrians opened gusts of fire with their heavy and light guns against the region of the village of Labuzy, east of Baranovitchy. Under cover of this fire, the Austrians delivered two violent counterattacks. The Russians drove the Austro-Hungarians back on both occasions, bringing to bear on them the fire of their artillery, machine guns, and rifles.

During the repulse of repeated attacks made on July 7, 1916, south of Lake Narotch, the Germans captured two officers and 210 men. They repelled weak advances at other points.

Repeated efforts by strong Russian forces against the front from Tzirin to the southeast of Gorodische and on both sides of the Darovo ended in complete failure. The dead lying before the German positions numbered thousands. In addition to these the Russians lost a considerable number of prisoners.

Austro-Hungarian troops fighting along the bend of the Styr, opposed for four weeks past to hostile forces which have increased from threefold to fivefold superiority, found it necessary to withdraw their advanced lines which were exposed to a double outflanking movement. Assisted by the cooperation of German troops west of Kolki and by the Polish Legion near Kaloda, the movement was executed undisturbed by the Russians.

In the region of the lower Styr, west of the Czartorysk sector, the Russians were closely pressing the Austrians. After the battle



they occupied the Gorodok-Manevichi station on the Okonsk-Zagorovka-Gruziatyn line. In combats seventy-five officers in the zone of the railway were taken with 2,000 men, and also in the Gruziatyn region.

Following the capture of the village of Grady, and after a hot bayonet encounter, the village of Dolzyca, on the main road between Kolki and Manevichi, and village of Gruziatyn were taken. The number of German and Austrian prisoners continued to increase.

In the region of Optevo a great number of Austrians were sabered during pursuit of the Russians after a cavalry charge. More than 600 men, five cannon, six machine guns, and three machine gun detachments, with complete equipment, were captured.

East of Monasterzyska (Galicia), the Russians took possession of the village of Gregorov, carrying off more than 1,000 prisoners. There were artillery duels at many points. Russian troops continued to press back the Austrians. In southeastern Galicia, between Delatyn and Sadzovka, a Russian attack in strong force was defeated by Alpine Territorials.

In the Bukowina, in successful engagements, Austrian troops brought in 500 prisoners and four machine guns.

On July 8, 1916, the Russians fighting against the army group of Prince Leopold of Bavaria, repeated several times their strong attacks. The attacks again broke down, with heavy losses for the Russians. In the fighting of the last few days the Germans captured two officers and 631 men.

The Russian offensive on the lower Stokhod continued. South of the Sarny-Kovel railway the villages of Goulevitchi and Kachova were occupied after fighting. Farther south there were fires everywhere in the region of the villages of Arsenovitchi, Janovka, and Douchtch.

In southern Galicia, General Lechitsky occupied Delatyn after very violent fighting. Delatyn is a railway junction of great importance. Depots of war material, steel shields, grenades, cartridges, iron, and wire abandoned by the Austrians have been captured at many points,

On the northern section of the front, apart from fruitless Russian attacks in the region of Skobowa, east of Gorodische, nothing of importance occurred on July 9, 1916.

The Russians advancing toward the Stokhod line were repulsed everywhere. Their attacks west and southwest of Lutsk were unsuccessful. German aeroplane squadrons made a successful attack on Russian shelters east of the Stokhod.

Near the villages of Svidniki, Starly Mossor and Novy Mossor, on the left bank of the Stokhod, lively fighting was in progress. The Russians took German prisoners at three points. Between Kiselin and Zubilno the Austrians attempted a surprise attack, but it was repulsed with heavy loss.

The total number of prisoners taken by General Kaledine, from July 4 to July 8, 1916, was 341 officers and 9,145 unwounded soldiers. He also captured ten pieces of artillery, forty-eight machine guns, sixteen bomb throwers, 7,930 rifles, and depots of engineering materials. These figures were supposed to be added to those given previously, which included 300 officers, 12,000 men and forty-five pieces of artillery.

On the Galician front there was a particularly intense artillery action on both banks of the Dniester.

From the coast to Pinsk no events of special importance occurred during July 10, 1916.

The Russians made futile attacks with very strong forces at several points against the German line along the Stokhod River, notably near Czereviszcze, Hulevicze, Korysmi and Janmaka, and on both sides of the Kovel-Rovno railway.

Near Hulevicze the Germans drove back Russian troops beyond their position by a strong counterattack, capturing more than 700 prisoners and three machine guns.

In the Stokhod region the Germans received strong reenforcements and brought up powerful artillery, enabling them to offer a very stubborn resistance.

On the Briaza-Fondoul-Moldava front, northwest of Kimpolung, in the southern Bukowina, considerable Austro-Hungarian forces were thrown back by Russian troops after violent engagements at various points.

German aeroplanes successfully attacked the railway station at Zamirie on the Minsk-Baranovitchy railway line, dropping as many as sixty bombs.

An attempt to cross the Dvina made by weak Russian forces west of Friedrichstadt on July 11, 1916, and attacks south of Narotch Lake were frustrated.

Russian detachments which attempted to establish themselves on the left bank of the Stokhod River, near Janowka, were attacked. Not a single man of these detachments got away from the southern bank. At this point and on the Kovel-Rovno railroad the Germans took more than 800 prisoners. The booty taken on the Stokhod during the two days, apart from a number of officers and 1,932 men, included twelve machine guns. The German aerial squadron continued their activity in attacks east of the Stokhod. A Russian captive balloon was shot down.

Russian artillery dispersed Germans who were attempting to bring artillery against the Ikakul works. Near the village of Grouchivka, north of Hulevicze, the Germans made their appearance on the right bank of the river, but later were ejected therefrom.

In the sector of the Tscherkassy farm, south of Krevo, the Germans, supported by violent artillery fire, took the offensive, but were repulsed by Russian counterattacks.

On the whole front from Riga to Poliessie, there was intermittent artillery fire, together with rifle fire. German aviators dropped bombs on the station of Zamirie and the town of Niesvij, where several houses were set on fire.

German troops, belonging to General von Bothmer's army group, by an encircling counterattack, carried out near and to the north of Olessa, northwest of Buczacz, on July 12, 1916, drove back Russian troops which had pushed forward and took more than 400 prisoners.

On the Stokhod there were violent artillery duels. German aeroplanes appeared behind the Russian front and dropped many bombs, doing considerable damage.

Again, on July 13, 1916, the Russians advanced on the Stokhod, near Zarecz, but were driven back by troops belonging to Gen-

eral von Linsingen's army, and lost a few hundred men and some machine guns which fell into the hands of the Germans. Other German detachments successfully repeated their attacks on the east bank of the Stokhod River.

German aeroplanes bombarded Lutsk and the railway station at Kivertsk, northeast of Lutsk.

To the north of the Sarny-Kovel railway the Russians gained a footing in their opponents' positions on the west bank of the Stokhod. A surprise attack, made by strong German forces late in the evening, drove them back again to the opposite bank.

In the region of the lower Lipa, German guns opened a violent fire against the Russian trenches and inflicted heavy losses.

The town of Polonetchki, northeast of Baranovitchy, was attacked by German aeroplanes, which threw many bombs and caused considerable damage.

West of the Strypa the Austro-German forces launched a series of furious counterattacks, as a result of which the Russians claimed to have captured over 3,000 prisoners.

West and northwest of Buczacz the Russians made two attacks on a broad front which were repulsed. During the third assault, however, they succeeded in penetrating the Austro-Hungarian positions northwest of Buczacz, but were completely ejected during a most bitter night battle.

On July 14, 1916, the Germans under cover of a violent fire, approached the barbed-wire entanglements of the Russians on the grounds in the region of the River Servitch, a tributary of the Niemen. They were repulsed by Russian artillery fire.

The same day the Germans opened a violent artillery fire against Russian lines eastward of Gorodichtche (Baranovitchy sector), after they assumed the offensive in the region of the village of Skrobowa, but were repulsed with heavy losses. A little later, after a continuation of the bombardment, the Germans took the offensive in massed formation a little farther north of Skrobowa, but were again repulsed by Russian fire.

After having taken breath the Germans made a fresh attack in the region of the same village, but the Russian troops repulsed the Germans with machine-gun and rifle fire. The Russians then



made a counterattack which resulted in the capture of more ground.

Repeated German attempts to advance toward the sector southwest of the village of Skrobowa were also repulsed by Russian fire.

On the front of the Russian position southeast of Riga the Germans took the offensive against the Russian sectors near Frantz, northeast of Pulkarn, but were repulsed by Russian artillery and infantry fire and by hand-grenade fighting. Russian detachments which attempted to cross the Dvina, near Lennewaden, northwest of Friedrichstadt, were repulsed. Numerous bombs were dropped from German aeroplanes on railway stations on the Smorgon-Molodetchna line.

On the right wing of their Riga positions, the Russians, supported strongly by artillery on land and sea, made some progress during July 15, 1916, in the region west of Kemmern. On the remainder of the north front there were some local engagements which, however, did not modify the general situation.

Troops belonging to the army of Field Marshal Prince Leopold of Bavaria recaptured some positions in the region of Skrobowa, which had been lost the previous day. The Russians in turn attempted to regain this ground by making a number of very strong counterattacks, but were not successful. In this attempt they lost a few hundred men and six officers.

Austrian troops dispersed some Russian detachments southwest of Moldaha. Near Jablonica their patrols captured, by a number of daring undertakings, a few hundred prisoners.

Near Delatyn, in the Carpathian Mountains, there was increased activity. Russian advance guards entered Delatyn, but were driven back to the southern outskirts. Another Russian attack to the southwest of the town broke down under the Austrian fire.

There also was a renewal of the fighting in the region southwest of Lutsk, west of Torchin. A number of Russian attacks were repulsed in this neighborhood.

At other points of the Volhynian front, in the region southeast of Sviniusky, near Lutsk, the Germans again assumed the of-

fensive and attacked in massed formations. This resulted in a series of strong counterattacks, which enabled the Russians to maintain their positions.

At many points in the region of Ostoff and Goubine, Russian troops registered local successes by very swiftly executed attacks which threatened to outflank their opponents, who were, therefore, forced to retreat in great haste. As a result of this, the Russians captured one heavy and one light battery as well as numerous cannon which had been installed in isolated locations. Upward of 3,000 prisoners fell into their hands.

In Volhynia, on July 16, 1916, to the east and southeast of Svinisuky village, Russian troops under General Sakharoff broke down the resistance of the Germans. In battles in the region of Pustomyty, more than 1,000 Germans and Austrian prisoners have been taken, together with three machine guns and much other military booty.

In the region of the lower Lipa the successful Russian advance continued. The Germans were making a stubborn resistance. In battles in this region the Russians took many prisoners and guns, as well as fourteen machine guns, a few thousand rifles and other equipment.

The total number of prisoners taken on July 16, 1916, in battles in Volhynia, was claimed to be 314 officers and 12,637 men. The Russians also claimed to have captured thirty guns, of which seventeen were heavy pieces, and a great many machine guns and much other material.

In the direction of Kirliababa, on the frontier of Transylvania, Russians have occupied a set of new positions.

In the region of Riga, skirmishes on both sides have been successful for the Russians, and parts of German trenches have been taken, together with prisoners. Increased fire west and south of Riga and on the Dvina front preceded Russian enterprises. Near Katarinehof, south of Riga, considerable Russian forces attacked. Lively fighting developed here.

On the Riga front artillery engagements continued throughout July 17 and 18, 1916. At Lake Miadziol, Russian infantry and a lake flotilla made a surprise attack on the Germans in the

night. German airmen manifested great activity from the region south of the Dvina to the Pinsk Marshes.

On the Stokhod there was artillery fighting at many places.

Russian troops repulsed by artillery fire an attempt on the part of the Germans to take the offensive north of the Odzer Marsh. Owing to the heavy rains the Dniester rose almost two and one half meters, destroying bridges, buttresses and ferry-boats, and considerably curtailing military operations.

On the Russian left flank, in the region of the Rivers Black and White Tscheremosche, southwest of Kutý, Russian infantry were advancing toward the mountain defiles.

Southwest of Delatyn the German troops drove back across the Pruth Russian detachments which had crossed to the western bank. The Germans took 300 prisoners.

On July 19, 1916, General Lechitsky's forces, which were advancing from the Bukowina and southern Galicia toward the passes of the Carpathians leading to the plains of Hungary, met with strong opposition in the region of Jablonica, situated at the northern end of a pass leading through the Carpathians to the important railroad center of Korosmezo, in Hungary.

Jablonica is about thirty-three miles west of Kutý and fifteen miles south of Delatyn. It is on the right of the sixty-mile front occupied by the advancing army of General Lechitsky.

No let-up was noticeable in the battle along the Stokhod, where the combined forces of the Central Powers seemed to be able to withstand all Russian attacks. Along the Lipa increased artillery fire was the order of the day. In Galicia the floods in the Dniester Valley continued to hamper military operations. Many minor engagements were fought both in the northern and central sectors of the front.

## CHAPTER XX

INCREASED STRENGTH OF THE RUSSIAN  
DRIVE

AS the month of July approached its end the Russian assaults became more and more violent. Along the entire front the most bitter and sanguinary fighting took place day after day and night after night. Artillery bombardments such as never had been heard before raged at hundreds of places at the same time. Troops in masses that passed all former experience were employed by the Russians to break the resistance of the Teutonic allies.

The latter, however, seemed to have their affairs well in hand. At many points they lost local engagements. At other points advanced positions had to be given up, and at still other points occasional withdrawals of a few miles became inevitable. But, all in all, the Austro-German lines held considerably well.

During the last two or three days of July, 1916, however, the German-Austrian forces suffered some serious reverses. On July 21, 1916, General Sakharoff had succeeded in crossing the Lipa River and in establishing himself firmly on its south bank. This brought him within striking distance of the important railway point of Brody on the Dubno-Lemberg railway, very close to the Russo-Galician border, and only fifty miles northeast of Lemberg.

In spite of the most determined resistance on the part of the Austrian troops, the Russian general was able to push his advantage during the next few days, and on July 27, 1916, Brody fell into his hands.

Less successful was the continued attack on the Stokhod line with the object of reaching Kovel. There the German-Austrian forces repulsed all Russian advances.

In the Bukowina, however, the Russians gradually pushed on. Slowly but surely they approached once more the Carpathian Mountain passes.



The same was true in eastern Galicia. After the fall of Kolomea in the early part of the month, the Russian advance had progressed steadily, even if slowly, in the direction of Stanislau and Lemberg. Closer and closer to Stanislau the Russian forces came, until on July 30, 1916, they were well within striking distance.

In the north, too, General Kuropatkin displayed greatly increased activity against Von Hindenburg's front, although as a result he gained only local successes.

Midsummer, 1916, then saw the Russians once more on a strong offensive along their entire front. How far this movement would ultimately carry them, it was hard to tell. Once more the way into the Hungarian plains seemed to be open to the czar's soldiers, and a sufficiently successful campaign in Galicia might easily force back the center of the line to such an extent that they might then have prospects of regaining some of the ground lost during their great retreat.

Interesting details of the terrific struggle which had been going on on the eastern front for many weeks are given in the following letter from an English special correspondent:

"I reached the headquarters of a certain Siberian corps about midnight on July 15, 1916, to find the artillery preparation, which had started at 4 p. m., in full blast. Floundering around through the mud, we came almost on to the positions, which were suddenly illuminated with fires started by Austrian shells in two villages near by, while the jagged flashes of bursting shells ahead caused us to extinguish the lights of the motor and to turn across the fields, ultimately arriving at the headquarters of a corps which I knew well on the Bzura line in Poland.

"Sitting in a tiny room in an unpretentious cottage with the commander, I followed the preparations which were being made for the assault. The ticking of the instruments gave news from the front, the line of which was visible from the windows by flares and rockets and burning villages. By midnight ten breaches had been made in the barbed wire, each approximately twenty paces broad, and the attacks were ordered for three o'clock in the morning.

"Rising at 5 a. m. I accompanied the commander of the corps to his observation point on a ridge. The attacks had already swept away the resistance of the enemy's first line.

"Thousands of prisoners were in our hands, and the enemy was already retiring rapidly. He therefore halted but a few minutes, pushing on to the advanced positions. The commander stopped repeatedly by the roadside tapping the field wires, and giving further instructions as to the disposition of the troops.

"As we moved forward we began to meet the flood from the battle field, first the lightly wounded, and then Austrian prisoners helping our heavily wounded, who were in carts.

"Before we were halfway to the positions a cavalry general splashed with mud met the commander and informed him that six guns were already in our hands. The next report from the field telephone increased the number to ten guns, with 2,000 prisoners, including some Germans.

"At quite an early hour the entire country was alive, and every department of the army beginning to move forward. All the roads were choked with ammunition parks, batteries, and transports following up our advancing troops; while the stream of returning caissons, the wounded, and the prisoners equaled in volume the tide of the advancing columns.

"The commander took up his position on a ridge which but a few hours before had been our advanced line. Thence the country could be observed for miles. Each road was black with moving troops, pushing forward on the heels of the enemy, whose field gun shells were bursting on the ridges just beyond.

"Here I met the commander of the division and his staff. Plans were immediately made for following up our success. Evidently the size of our group was discernible from some distant enemy observation point, for within five minutes came the howl of an approaching projectile and a 6-inch shell burst with a terrific crash in a neighboring field. Its arrival, which was followed at regular intervals by others ranging from 4-inch upward, was apparently unnoticed by the general, whose interest was entirely occupied with pressing his advantage.

"So swift was our advance that nearly half an hour elapsed before the newly strung field wires were working properly.

"The fire had become so persistent that our group scattered and hundreds of prisoners, whose black mass could be seen by the enemy, were removed beyond the possibility of observation. Then the corps commander, stretched on straw on the crest of the ridge, with his maps spread out, dictated directions to the operator of the field telephone who crouched beside him.

"Before and beneath us lay the abandoned line of Austrian trenches, separated from ours by a small stream, where since daylight the heroic engineers were laboring under heavy shell fire to construct a bridge to enable our cavalry and guns to pass in pursuit.

"Leaving the general we proceeded. Our troops had forced the line here at 3 a. m., wading under machine-gun and rifle fire in water and marsh above their waists, often to their armpits. The Austrian end of the bridge was a horrible place, as it was congested with dead, dying and horribly wounded men, who, as the ambulances were on the other side of the river, could not be removed. A sweating officer was urging forward the completion of the bridge, which was then barely wide enough to permit the waiting cavalry squadrons to pass in single file. On the opposite bank waited the ambulance to get across after the troops had passed. A number of German ambulance men were working furiously over their own and the Austrian wounded, many of whom, I think, must have been wounded by their own guns in an attempt to prevent the bridging of the stream. A more bloody scene I have not witnessed, though within a few hours the entire place was probably cleared up.

"Passing on I, for the first time, witnessed the actual taking of prisoners, and watched their long blue files as they passed out from their own trenches and were formed in groups allotted to Russian soldiers, who served as guides rather than guards, and sent to the rear.

"Near here I encountered about fifty captured Germans and talked with about a dozen of them. Certainly none of them showed the smallest lack of morale or any depression.

“By noon sufficient details of the fighting were available to indicate that this corps alone had taken between three and five thousand prisoners and twenty guns, of which four are said to be howitzers. When one is near the front the perspective of operations is nearly always faulty, and it was, therefore, impossible to estimate the effect of the movement as a whole, but I understand that all the other corps engaged had great success and everywhere advanced.”



## PART III—THE BALKANS

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### CHAPTER XXI

#### HOLDING FAST IN SALONIKI

THE six months ending with March, 1916, had been not only an eventful period in the Balkans, but a most unfortunate one for the Allies. In no theater of the war had they sustained such a series of smashing disasters in diplomacy as well as on the field of battle. First of all, early in the fall, the Austrians had begun their fourth invasion of Serbia, this time heavily reenforced by the Germans and in such numbers that it was obvious before the first attack was begun that Serbia by herself would not be able to hold back the invaders. And then, hardly had the real fighting begun, when Bulgaria definitely cast her lot in with the Teutons and Hungarians and attacked the Serbians from the rear.

While it was true that King Ferdinand and his governing clique had made this decision months before, it is nevertheless a fact that it was probably the blundering diplomacy of the Allies which was responsible for this action on the part of the Bulgarians. Under all circumstances King Ferdinand would probably have favored the Teutons, since by birth and early training he is an Austrian and, moreover, as he once expressed himself publicly, he was firmly convinced that the Teutons would ultimately win. But the Bulgarian people are sentimentally inclined toward the Russians and dislike the Germans. Had not the diplomatic policy of the Allies played into the hands of the king, they would naturally have turned toward the Allies.

Above all else the Bulgarians have desired either the freedom or the annexation of Macedonia, which is almost entirely inhab-

ited by Bulgars. The Germans made the definite promise that Macedonia should be theirs if they allied themselves with them. The Allies endeavored to promise as much, but the protests of Greece and Serbia stood in the way. Neither of these two nations was willing to give up its possessions in this disputed territory, though later, when she saw that her very existence was at stake, Serbia did make some concessions, but not until after Bulgaria had already taken her decision. Had the Allies disregarded these greedy bickerings on the part of her minor allies and promised as much as the Germans had promised, there is no doubt that the popular sentiment in Bulgaria would have been strong enough to block Ferdinand's policy.

In Greece, too, there had been the same blundering policy. Here the situation was much the same as in Bulgaria; the king, with his Teutonic affiliations, was in favor of the Germans, while the sentiment of the people was in favor of the Allies. Moreover, here the popular sentiment was voiced by and personified in quite the strongest statesman in Greece, Eleutherios Venizelos. Had the Allies made known to the Greeks definitely and in a public manner just what they were to expect by joining the Entente, the policy of the king would have been frustrated. But here again the ambitions of Italy in Asia Minor and in the Greek archipelago caused the same hesitation. The result was that popular enthusiasm was so dampened that the king was able to pursue his own policy.

Then came the disastrous invasion of Serbia; the Serbian armies were overwhelmed and practically annihilated, a few remnants only being able to escape through Albania. The assistance that was sent in the form of an Anglo-French army under General Sarrail came just too late. Having swept Macedonia clear of the Serbians, the Bulgarians next attacked the forces under Sarrail and hurled them back into the Greek territory about Saloniki.

The Italians, too, had attempted to take part in the Balkan operations, but with their own national interests obviously placed above the general interests of the whole Entente. They had landed on the Albanian coast, at Durazzo and Avlona, hoping

to hold territory which they desire ultimately to annex. Then followed the invasion of Montenegro and Albania by the Austrians and the Bulgarians, and the Italians were driven out of Durazzo, retaining only a foothold in Avlona.

By March, 1916, all major military operations had ceased. Except for the British and French at Saloniki and the Italians at Avlona, the Teutons and the Bulgarians had cleared the whole Balkan peninsula south of the Danube of their enemies and were in complete possession. The railroad running down through Serbia and Bulgaria to Constantinople was repaired where the Serbians had had time to injure it, and communications were established between Berlin and the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which had been one of the main objects of the campaign.

In the beginning, however, the Bulgarians did not venture to push their lines across the Greek frontier, though this is a part of Macedonia which is essentially Bulgarian in population. There are several reasons why the Bulgarians should have restrained themselves. The traditional hatred which the Greeks feel for the Bulgarians, so bitter that an American cannot comprehend its depths, would undoubtedly have been so roused by the presence of Bulgarian soldiers on Greek soil that the king would not have been able to have opposed successfully Venizelos and his party, who were strong adherents of the Allies. This would not have suited German policy, though to the victorious Bulgarians it would probably not have made much difference. Another reason was, as has developed since, that the Bulgarian communications were but feebly organized, and a further advance would have been extremely precarious. The roads through Macedonia are few, and the best are not suited to automobile traffic. The few prisoners that the French and English were able to take evinced the fact that the Bulgarians were being badly supplied and that the soldiers were starved to the point of exhaustion. And finally, from a military point of view, the Allied troops were now in the most favorable position. Their lines were drawn in close to their base, Saloniki, with short, interior communications. The Bulgarians, on the contrary,

were obliged to spread themselves around the wide semicircle formed by the Anglo-French lines. To have taken Saloniki would have been for them an extremely costly undertaking, if, indeed, it would have at all been possible.

On the other hand, it was equally obvious that the Allies were not, and would not be, for a long time to come, in a position to direct an effective offensive against the Bulgarians in Macedonia. That they and their German allies realized this was apparent from the fact that the German forces now began withdrawing in large numbers.

The Bulgarians, however, did not attempt to assist their German allies on any of the other fronts, a fact which throws some light on the Bulgarian policy. Naturally, it is in the interests of the Bulgarians that the Teutons should win the war, therefore it might have been expected that they would support them on other fronts, notably in Galicia. That this has never been done shows conclusively that the alliance with the Germans is not popular among the Bulgarians. They have, rather reluctantly, been willing to fight on their own territory, or what they considered rightly their own territory, but they have not placed themselves at the disposal of the Germans on the other fronts. It is obvious that Ferdinand has not trusted to oppose his soldiers against the Russians.

Meanwhile the forces under Sarraïl were being daily augmented and their position about Saloniki was being strengthened. By this time all the Serbians who had fled through Albania, including the aged King Peter, had been transported to the island of Corfu, where a huge sanitarium was established, for few were the refugees that did not require some medical treatment. Cholera did, in fact, break out among them, which caused a protest on the part of the Greek Government. Just how many Serbians arrived at Corfu has never been definitely stated, but recent reports would indicate that they numbered approximately 100,000. All those fit for further campaigning needed to be equipped anew and rearmed.



## CHAPTER XXII

MILITARY AND POLITICAL EVENTS  
IN GREECE

ON March 27, 1916, a squadron of seven German aeroplanes attempted to make a raid on Saloniki. Their purpose was to drop bombs on the British and French warships in the harbor, but the fire of the Allied guns frustrated their efforts and four of the aeroplanes were brought down. But during the encounter some of these aircraft dropped bombs into the city and twenty Greek civilians were killed, one of the bombs falling before the residence of General Moschopoulos, commander of the Greek forces in Saloniki.

Deep resentment against the Germans flared up throughout Greece on account of this raid, which found expression in bitter editorials in the Liberal press against the continued neutrality of Greece. The question of the declaration of martial law was raised in an exciting session of the Chamber of Deputies, which lasted till late at night. The Government discouraged all hostile comment on the action of the Germans, and Premier Skouloudis declined to continue a debate involving discussion of foreign relations "because the highest interests impose silence." Notwithstanding the attitude of the government the raid was characterized in the chamber as "simply assassination" and as "German frightfulness." Plans were started to hold mass meetings in Athens and Saloniki, but the police forbade them. At the funerals of the victims, however, large crowds gathered in spite of the efforts of the police to disperse them and the ceremonies were marked by cries of "Down with the barbarians!" and "Down with the Germans!"

Hardly had this agitation died down when Venizelos, who for a long time had remained silent, so aloof from politics that, to quote his own statement, "I do not even read the reports of the proceedings in the Chamber," resumed active participation in the nation's affairs by giving out a lengthy interview to the

press, as well as with an editorial in his own personal organ. This latter occupied an entire page and reviewed completely the position of the Greek monarch since the dissolution of the last Chamber of Deputies. Referring to the king's alleged characterization of himself as a "dreamer," M. Venizelos said:

"By keeping the country in a state of chronic peaceful war through purposeless mobilization, the present government has brought Greece to the verge of economic, material and moral bankruptcy. This policy, unhappily, is not a dream, but downright folly." He further laid great stress on the Bulgarian peril, pointing out that the utmost to be gained by the present policy would be to leave Greece the same size, while Bulgaria, flushed with victory, trained for war, enlarged by the addition of Serbia and Macedonia and allied with the Turks, would not wait long before falling on her southern neighbor. "Who thinks," he continued, "that under these conditions that Greece, unaided, could drive the Bulgars from Macedonia, once they have seized it, is a fool. The politicians who do not see this inevitable danger, are blind, and unfortunate are the kings following such politicians, and more unfortunate still the lands where sovereigns fall their victims."

And, indeed, the ex-premier's references to the economic ruin of the country were strongly supported by the dispatches that had for some time been coming from the Greek capital. "Greece," said a prominent official to a press correspondent, "is much more likely to be starved into war than Germany is to be starved out of it."

The deficit in the Greek treasury for the previous year was now shown to have amounted to £17,000,000, or \$85,000,000. The budget for 1916 authorized an expenditure of \$100,000,000, which was double the entire state revenues. For the masses the situation was daily becoming more difficult. The streets of Athens were said to be alive with the beggars, while the island of Samos was in a sporadic state of revolt. At Piraeus and Patras there were disquieting demonstrations of popular discontent with the increasing cost of living. Many commodities had more than doubled in price. This situation was largely due to the

mobilization, as in the case of the fishermen. As most of them were with the colors, the price of fish, which had hitherto been one of the main food supplies, had become prohibitive to the poorer families.

The sentiment of the people was further expressed on April 7, 1916, when the Greeks celebrated the 100th anniversary of their national independence. On this occasion Venizelos appeared in public for the first time since his retirement from political life, after he had been obliged to resign by the king. When he left the cathedral in Athens, where services were held, thousands of persons followed his motor car, cheering enthusiastically. Finally his car could proceed no farther, being densely packed about by the people, who broke forth into deafening cheers and shouts of "Long live our national leader!" and "Long live Venizelos!"

At about this time, on April 14, 1916, a new critical situation was precipitated between the Allies and the Greek Government. On that date the British Minister at Athens had asked permission of the Greek Government to transport Serbian troops from Corfu to Saloniki by way of Patras, Larissa, and Volo, which involved the use of the Peloponnesian railway. This was peremptorily refused as involving a breach of Greek neutrality.

Under ordinary conditions transports would have conveyed the Serbians from Corfu to Saloniki, such a trip requiring less than three days. But the German submarines had been so active in these waters of late that the Allies desired to evade this danger, contending that it was with the connivance of the Greek Government officials that the Germans were able to maintain submarine bases among the islands. Moreover, they also contended that the cases were different from what it would have been had the request concerned French or British troops. The Greeks were allies of the Serbians, bound to them by a formal treaty, and though they had refused to assist them in a military sense, as the terms of the treaty demanded, they might at least help them in their need. Two days later, on April 16, 1916, the Chamber of Deputies adjourned for the session, which left the whole matter in the hands of the government. However, this

question hung fire for some time, and later dispatches would indicate that the Allies did not press their point, for eventually when the arrival of the Serbian troops in Saloniki was announced, it was stated incidentally that they had come by means of transports.

But meanwhile Venizelos was continuing his campaign against the ministry. On April 16, 1916, the Liberals had attempted to hold several public meetings in Athens, which were vigorously broken up by the police, or, according to some reports, by agents of the government in civilian dress. The following day Venizelos gave out an interview to the press in which he said:

"I beg you to bring the events of yesterday and the earnest protest of a majority of the Greeks to the knowledge of the American people, who have struggled for so long to establish free speech as the fundamental right of a free people. Here in Greece we are confronted by the question whether we are to have a democracy presided over by a king or whether at this hour of our history we must accept the doctrine of the divine rights of kings. The present government represents in no sense the majority of the Greek people. We Liberals, in the course of a year received the vote of the majority. At the last election, which was nothing more than a burlesque on the free exercise of the right of suffrage, we were not willing to participate in a farcical formality. . . . Now it is even sought to deny us the right of free speech. Our meetings were held within inclosed buildings. Those who came to them were invited, but the police threw out our doorkeepers, put in their own and let enter whomsoever they, the police, wanted to be present at the meetings."

It was now evident that Venizelos had determined to fight the present government to the bitter end.

On May 7, 1916, it was demonstrated that the contention of the king, that the agitation in favor of Venizelos and the demonstrations in his favor were largely artificial, was not true, in one electoral district of Greece at least. Venizelos had been nominated candidate for deputy to the National Assembly in My-



telene, and when the election took place, on the above date, he was elected with practically no opposition and amid a tremendous enthusiasm. On the following day, May 8, 1916, at a by-election in Kavalla, Eastern Macedonia, Constantine Jourdanou, a candidate of the Venizelos Liberty party, was also elected a deputy to the National Assembly by an 85 per cent majority vote.

But these were merely demonstrations—meant merely as indications of popular sentiment—for neither Venizelos nor the Kavalla representative had any intention of taking their seats in the chamber, which they considered illegally elected.

Meanwhile practically no military activity had been displayed. On March 17, 1916, a dispatch was issued from Vienna to the effect that the Austrian army had reached the vicinity of Avlona and had engaged the Italians in pitched battle outside the town, into which they were driving them. But apparently there was little truth in this report, for some weeks later a body of Italian troops were reported to have crossed the Greek frontier in Epirus, which caused an exchange of notes between the Greek and Italian governments, by no means the best of friends, on account of their conflicting ambitions in Albania. Further encounters between both Austrians and Bulgarians and the Italians in Avlona were reported during the spring, but apparently the Italians were well able to hold their own.

There were, however, indications that the Allies in Saloniki had been steadily strengthening their positions and augmenting their numbers, and that, conscious of their growing strength, they were throwing out their lines. In the first week in May came a dispatch announcing that they had occupied Florina, a small town only some fifteen miles south of Monastir, though still on Greek territory.

That there was really some truth in these announcements; that the Allies were really showing some indications of expanding their lines and were assuming a threatening attitude, was indicated by the next move made on the board, this time by the Bulgarians; a move, however, which was obviously of a defensive nature, though at the time it seemed to portend a Bulgarian offensive.

On May 26, 1916, the Bulgarians for the first time ventured across the Greek frontier. And not only did they cross the frontier, but, instead of attacking the Allies, they forced the Greek forces occupying a point of strategic value to evacuate it and occupied it themselves.

Fort Rupel, on the Struma River, and north of Demir Hissar, is about six miles within Greek territory. It commands a deep gorge, or defile, which forms a sort of natural passageway through which troops can be marched easily into Greek territory from Bulgaria. To either side tower difficult mountains and rocky hills. On account of these natural features Greece had fortified this defile after the Balkan Wars so that she might command it in case of a Bulgarian invasion. On the commanding prominences the Greeks had also built fortifications.

It was the chief, the most important, of these forts that the Bulgarians took. A courier was sent forward with notice to the Greek commander that he had two hours in which to evacuate the position with his troops. This he did peacefully, and before evening the Bulgarians were installed, though it was said that they had given due assurances that their occupation was merely a temporary measure undertaken as a defensive precaution, and that as soon as the need should cease the fort would be returned to Greece.

On the following day came the announcement that the Bulgarians, in strong force, had deployed from Fort Rupel and had also occupied Fort Dragotin and Fort Kanivo. At the same time unusual activity on the part of the Bulgarians was also reported from Xanthi. Here, on the left bank of the Mesta River, which for some distance from its mouth forms the Bulgar-Greek boundary, the Bulgarians were collecting material for building pontoon bridges.

Naturally this action on the part of the Bulgarians caused wild excitement throughout Greece. The government organs stated that the forts had been taken by German forces, but this was soon proved to be untrue.

In reporting this movement the Bulgarian Government added, by way of explanation and excuse:

"Two months ago the Anglo-French troops began the abandonment of the fortified camp at Saloniki and started a movement toward our frontier. The principal enemy forces were stationed in the Vardar Valley and to the eastward through Dovatupete to the Struma Valley, and to the westward through the district of Subotsko and Vodena to Florina. A part of the reconstituted Serbian army has also been landed at Saloniki. Artillery fire has occurred daily during the past month."

Evidently Bulgaria was anxious to impress on the outside world the fact that she had invaded Greek territory entirely for defensive purposes, for only several days later a correspondent of the Associated Press was allowed to send through a report of an inspection he had made of the Bulgarian camp, something that had not previously been permitted. From this report it was evident that the Bulgarian army was not contemplating a forward movement.

These assurances probably had their effect in calming the excitement in Greece, a result which Germany was no doubt wishful of obtaining. Nevertheless the fact that the government had quietly permitted the Bulgarians to take the forts was not by any means calculated to increase its popularity with the masses and made for the strengthening of the Venizelos party.

In spite of the formal protests which the Greek Government made against the occupation of its territory and fortifications by Bulgarian troops, there was not a little reason for suspecting that the Skouloudis government was working on some secret understanding, if not with the Bulgarians, then with the Germans. At least this was the general impression that was created in France and England, as reflected in the daily press.

On June 8, 1916, it was reported from Saloniki that the Allies were about to institute a commercial blockade of Greek ports, preliminary to presenting certain demands, the exact nature of which was not given out, but which were expected to include the demobilization of the Greek army.

The notice of the blockade again aroused the excitement of the Greek population, but not so much against the Allies as

against the Skouloudis government. And this was because what the Allies were expected to demand was just what the majority of the Greek masses seemed most to want, the demobilization of the army; the return to their vocations of the thousands of workmen with the colors. The Venizelos party was especially in favor of such a measure, for its leaders claimed that it was because the mass of the voters was with the army and was therefore deprived of their suffrage, that the sentiment of the Greek people could not be determined.

On June 9, 1916, it was announced from Athens that the king had signed an order demobilizing twelve classes of the army, amounting to 150,000 men. But this order was not, for some reason, put into execution, nor was there any indication of the Allies putting an end to the blockade. On the contrary, on the same day it was announced that the Greek captain of the port at Saloniki had been removed and a French naval officer had been put in his place. Entry to the port had also been refused to Greek ships from Kavala, and an embargo had been placed on Greek ships in French ports. Obviously the Allies were demanding something more than the demobilization of the army. As a matter of fact, they had not yet formally presented their demands.

From later reports it was shown that the Allies had prepared their demands formally and that they were to have been presented on June 13, 1916. But the evening before, on the 12th, certain events took place in Athens which caused them to delay the presentation of their note, holding it back for revision.

On the 12th a military fête had been held at the Stadium, at which members of the British Legation were present, including the military attaché and Admiral Palmer, the new chief of the British Naval Mission. When the king and his suite appeared at the Stadium, Greek police officers immediately grouped themselves around the British representatives, giving the inference that the royal party needed to be protected from them. The indignant Englishmen immediately left the Stadium. After the fête a mob collected in the street and began a demonstration against the Allies. The crowd was escorted by fifty or



sixty policemen in uniform. It first marched to the Hotel Grande Bretagne, where the French Minister resided, and began shouting insulting remarks. Next the British Legation building was visited and a similar hostile demonstration was made. Thence the mob proceeded to the office of the "Nea Hellas," a Venizelist journal, hurled stones through the windows and assaulted the editor and his staff. The editor, in defending himself, fired a revolver over the heads of the mob, whereupon he was arrested and thrown into jail. During the same evening another demonstration was made in a theater, in which the performers made most insulting remarks regarding the representatives of the Allies. Several meetings were held in other parts of the city at the same time, at which resolutions were passed against the Allies, one of these resolutions denouncing the conduct of the Allies toward neutral countries, "and especially their conduct toward the President of the United States."

Finally, on June 23, 1916, the full text of the demands of the Allies on Greece, signed by the representatives of France, Great Britain, and Russia and indorsed by Italy, was given out, simultaneously with the official announcement that all the conditions had been accepted by the Greek Government. The text was as follows:

"As they have already solemnly declared verbally and in writing, the three Protecting Powers of Greece do not ask her to emerge from her neutrality. Of this fact they furnish a striking proof by placing foremost among their demands the complete demobilization of the Greek army in order to insure to the Greek people tranquillity and peace. But they have numerous and legitimate grounds for suspicion against the Greek Government, whose attitude toward them has not been in conformity with repeated engagements, nor even with the principles of loyal neutrality.

"Thus, the Greek Government has all too often favored the activities of certain foreigners who have openly striven to lead astray Greek public opinion, to distort the national feeling of Greece, and to create in Hellenic territory hostile organizations

which are contrary to the neutrality of the country and tend to compromise the security of the military and naval forces of the Allies.

"The entrance of Bulgarian forces into Greece and the occupation of Fort Rupel and other strategic points, with the connivance of the Hellenic Government, constitute for the allied troops a new threat which imposes on the three powers the obligation of demanding guarantees and immediate measures.

"Furthermore, the Greek Constitution has been disregarded, the free exercise of universal suffrage has been impeded, the Chamber of Deputies has been dissolved a second time within a period of less than a year against the clearly expressed will of the people, and the electorate has been summoned to the polls during a period of mobilization, with the result that the present chamber only represents an insignificant portion of the electoral college, and that the whole country has been subjected to a system of oppression and of political tyranny, and has been kept in leading strings without regard for the legitimate representations of the powers.

"These powers have not only the right, but also the imperative duty, of protesting against such violations of the liberties, of which they are the guardians in the eyes of the Greek people.

"The hostile attitude of the Hellenic Government toward the powers, who have emancipated Greece from an alien yoke, and have secured her independence, and the evident collusion of the present cabinet with the enemies of these powers, constitute for them still stronger reasons for acting with firmness, in reliance upon the rights which they derive from treaties, and which have been vindicated for the preservation of the Greek people upon every occasion upon which it has been menaced in the exercise of its rights or in the enjoyment of its liberties.

"The Protecting Powers accordingly see themselves compelled to exact immediate application of the following measures:

"1. Real and complete demobilization of the Greek Army, which shall revert as speedily as possible to a peace footing.

"2. Immediate substitution for the existing ministry of a

business cabinet devoid of any political prejudice and presenting all the necessary guarantees for the application of that benevolent neutrality which Greece is pledged to observe toward the Allied Powers and for the honesty of a fresh appeal to the electors.

"3. Immediate dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, followed by fresh elections within the time limits provided by the constitution, and as soon as general demobilization will have restored the electoral body to its normal condition.

"4. Dismissal, in agreement with the Allied Powers, of certain police officials whose attitude, influenced by foreign guidance, has facilitated the perpetration of notorious assaults upon peaceable citizens and the insults which have been leveled at the Allied Legations and their members.

"The Protecting Powers, who continue to be inspired with the utmost friendliness and benevolence toward Greece, but who are, at the same time, determined to secure, without discussion or delay, the application of these indispensable measures, can but leave to the Hellenic Government entire responsibility for the events which might supervene if their just demands were not immediately accepted."

The treaties referred to in the note, on which the "three Protecting Powers" base their right to intervene in the affairs of Greece to enforce the carrying out of her constitution, date back to the early period of last century, when the three nations in question assisted the newly liberated Greeks in establishing a government and assumed a semiprotectorate.

This note was presented to Premier Skouloudis, but he refused to accept it on the ground that no Greek Cabinet existed, as it had been deposited at the Foreign Office while he was on his way back from the residence of the king, where he had presented the resignation of the ministry.

The people were unaware of what had happened until evening, when newspapers and handbills, distributed broadcast, made known the text of the demands. King Constantine returned hastily to Athens. All the troops in the city were ordered under arms. The Deputies were summoned to the Chamber, where

Skouloudis announced that he had resigned, after which the Chamber immediately adjourned again.

On the following day the king summoned Alexander Zaimis, a Greek politician, reputed to be in favor of the Allies, to form a new Cabinet. He immediately organized a new ministry, comprising himself as Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs; General Callaris, Minister of War and Marine; George Rallis, Minister of Finance; Phocian Negria, of Communications; Colonel Harlambis, of the Interior; Anthony Momperatos, of Justice; Constantine Libourkis, of Instruction, and Colligas, of National Economy. The first act of the new Cabinet was to announce a new election of Deputies to the National Chamber, to take place on August 7, 1916. The new Premier also announced that the demands of the Allies would be carried out to the letter. As a token of good faith, the chief of police of Athens was immediately dismissed and Colonel Zimbrakakis, who had been police chief during the Venizelos régime, was installed in his place. The Allies, on their part, at once raised the blockade and agreed to advance Greece a loan to tide over her present financial difficulties.

For some days afterward large and enthusiastic pro-Venizelos demonstrations took place in Athens and other Greek cities, in which the labor unions and the soldiers were reported to take a very prominent part. Meanwhile the demobilization of the Greek army was begun in good faith.

During this period there had been no further aggression, or advance, on the part of the Bulgarians. And while there had been a number of German officers present at the demand for the evacuation of Fort Rupel by the Greeks, as well as a small force of German engineers, all the reports emanating from Bulgaria indicated, directly or indirectly, that the German forces had been almost entirely drawn away from the Balkans, to meet the gradually increasing pressure that both the Russians on the eastern front and the English and French on the western front were bringing to exert on the Teutonic forces. Being practically left to themselves, for the Turks, too, had their hands full in their Asiatic provinces, and considering the need of

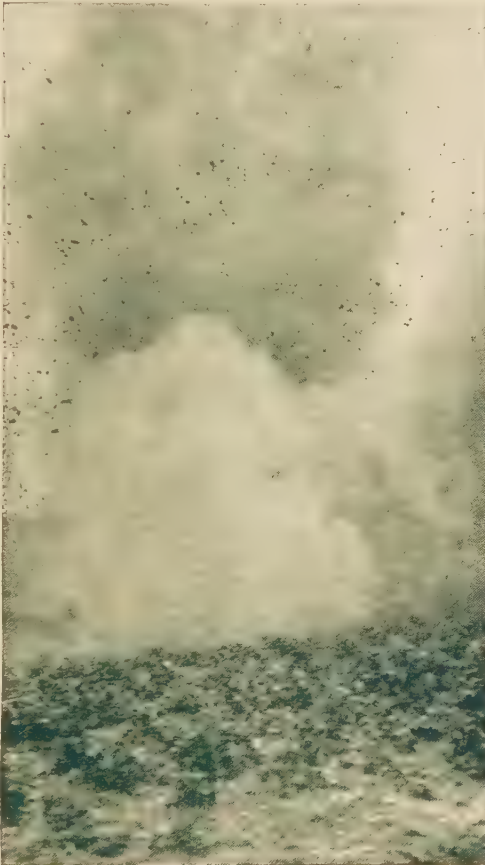


forces for garrison duty in conquered territory, especially in Albania and upper Serbia, as well as the army needed to watch the movements of the Rumanians, it was doubtful if the Bulgarians had more than 300,000 men to spare for their lines opposing those of the Allies at Saloniki.

The Allies, on the other hand, had been daily waxing stronger. At least 100,000 Serbians had been added to their forces about Saloniki before the beginning of August. There were, at this time, about 350,000 French and British soldiers in Saloniki, so that the total force was not very far short of half a million. General Mahon, the British commander, had gone to Egypt, to superintend the removal to Saloniki of the British troops there, who had been provided as a defending force when the danger of a German attack in that section seemed imminent. These forces were estimated at another 200,000. Added to this the favorable position of the Allies from a strategic point of view, it was obvious, by the middle of August, that if active hostilities were to break out on the Saloniki front very shortly, the initiative would most likely come from the Allies.

# AUSTRIAN DRIVE AND ITALY'S COUNTEROFFENSIVE

MINING OPERATIONS · MOUNTAIN BATTLE FRONTS · HUGE  
MORTAR GUNS · TROOPS · WRECKED FORTIFICATIONS



Canadian Official Photograph

An explosion in a mined trench. This incident of warfare is most dreaded of all, since it comes without warning and the mangled victims are powerless to defend themselves



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An Austrian 30.5 centimeter mortar in position. The gunner is ready and the officer is just giving the command to fire. Meantime, another great 12-inch shell is being brought up for the next loading



Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

A huge Italian mortar dismounted and an unexploded shell, both left in a shattered fort from which the Italians were compelled to retreat on the advance of the Austrians in their spring offensive





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**An Italian military camp in the Dolomites. On this mountain frontier the fighting between Austrian and Italian armies has been strange and difficult**



Copyright, American Press Association

An Austrian entrenchment high up on a mountainside. The soldiers are pulling barbed wire devices up the slope in order to strengthen their defenses



Copyright, American Press Association

An Austrian factory at Monfalcone, wrecked by bombardment  
In the foreground are Italian officers





Copyright, American Press Association

Italian troops advancing on the Carso Plateau, recognized by both Austrians and Italians as the key to Gorizia  
The region has been the scene of some of the fiercest struggles of the war





Copyright Medem Photo Service

An Italian engineer boring a tunnel for mining a mountain side. In the strange warfare on this front whole mountain tops are shattered in the terrific mine explosions

## PART IV—AUSTRO-ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

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### CHAPTER XXIII

#### RESUMPTION OF OPERATIONS ON THE ITALIAN FRONT

THROUGHOUT the early part of March, 1916, military operations on the Italian front were very restricted. At the end of February the atmospheric conditions, which up till then had remained exceptionally favorable, changed suddenly, giving place to a period of bad weather, with meteorological phenomena particularly remarkable in that theater of the operations, which among all those of the European war is the most Alpine and the most difficult. In the mountain zone snow fell very heavily, causing frequent great avalanches and sometimes the movement of extensive snow fields. Communications of every kind were seriously interrupted. Not only shelters and huts, but in many cases columns of men and supplies on the march were swept away. The unceasing tempest made it difficult and in some cases quite impossible to render any aid, but owing to an organized service for such eventualities, ample and effective assistance was given in the great majority of cases. This led to the speedy restoration of communications and supplies. Nevertheless the distressing but inevitable loss of human lives was comparatively large.

In the lowland zone heavy and constant rains caused landslides in the lines of defense and shelters. The rise of the rivers and the consequent floods soon made the ground impassable. Even the main roads were interrupted at several points. In the whole theater of operations it was a regular battle against adverse circumstances.

Austrian troops in many places used the heavy snowfall to their advantage. By means of mines, bombs and artillery fire they produced avalanches artificially. Thus on March 8, 1916, some damage was done in this manner to Italian positions in the Lagazos zone. On the same day Italian forces succeeded in pushing their lines forward for a slight distance in the zone between the Iofana peaks (in the Dolomites), as well as in the valley of the middle Isonzo and in the Zagara sector. Along the entire front vigorous artillery fire was maintained.

The artillery combat gradually increased in vehemence during the next few days, especially on the Isonzo front, indicating a resumption of offensive movements. About the middle of March, 1916, Italian troops began again to attack the Austrian positions. On March 15, 1916, a lively artillery duel and a series of attacks and counterattacks were repulsed from the Isonzo front.

Italian infantry carried out a number of successive attacks in the region of Monte Rombon in the Plezzo basin and on the height commanding the position of Lucinico, southeast of San Martino del Carso. After an intensive preparation by artillery fire the Austrians, on March 16, 1916, launched at dawn a counterattack against the positions conquered by the Italians the day before, but were at first everywhere repulsed, suffering heavy losses.

The Austrian concentration of artillery fire, in which guns of all caliber were employed, lasted uninterruptedly throughout the day, forcing the Italians to evacuate the positions during the course of the night.

The Fella sector of the Carinthian front and also the Col di Lana sector in the Tyrol were shelled by Italian artillery. Italian airmen dropped bombs on Trieste without doing any damage.

Again atmospheric conditions enforced a lull in military operations during the next few days and brought to a sudden end what had seemed to be an extensive offensive movement on the part of the Italian forces on the Isonzo front.

On March 17, 1916, however, violent fighting again developed on the Isonzo front in the region of the Tolmino bridgehead. It

began with greatly increased artillery activity along the entire sector between Tolmino and Flitsch. Later that day the Austro-Hungarians launched an attack against the Italian forces which netted them considerable ground on the northern part of the bridgehead, as well as some 500 prisoners.

The battle in the Tolmino sector continued on March 18 and 19, 1916, and to a slighter degree on March 20, 1916. On the first of these three days the Austro-Hungarian troops succeeded in advancing beyond the road between Celo and Ciginj and to the west of the St. Maria Mountain. Italian counterattacks failed. South of the Mrzli, too, the Italians lost a position and had to withdraw toward Gabrije, losing some 300 prisoners. Increased artillery activity was noticeable on the Carinthian front, particularly in the Fella sector; in the Dolomites, especially in the Col di Lana sector; in the Sugana Valley and at some points on the west Tyrol front. Goritz, too, was again subjected to heavy Italian gunfire.

On the following day, March 19, 1916, fighting continued at the Tolmino bridgehead as a result of Italian efforts to conquer positions firmly in Austro-Hungarian hands. The number of Italians captured reached 925 and the number of machine guns taken was increased to seven. Several Italian attacks against Mrzli and Krn (Monte Nero) broke down. On the Rombon the Austro-Hungarians captured a position and took 145 Italians and two machine guns.

Lively fighting continued on the Carinthian front. In the Tyrol frontier district Italian artillery again held the Col di Lana section and some points south of the front under heavy artillery fire.

On the Goritz bridgehead Austro-Hungarians in the morning set fire to an Italian position before the southern part of Podgora Height. In the afternoon Austro-Hungarian artillery shelled heavily the front before the bridgehead. During the night they ejected Italian forces from a trench before Bevma.

Again on March 20, 1916, Italian counterattacks against the positions captured by the Austro-Hungarians during the preceding days failed. Again fighting slowed down for a few days.



As usual, resumption of military operations was indicated by increased artillery fire.

In the Rovereto zone on March 23, 1916, an artillery duel was followed during the night by Austro-Hungarian attacks against Italian positions at Moriviccio, near Rio Comeraso, and in the Adige and Terragnole Valleys. These were repulsed. Throughout the theater of operations bad weather limited, however, artillery action on the Isonzo, which was active only near Tolmino and the heights northwest of Goritz.

On March 25, 1916, Italian artillery again bombarded the Doberdo Plateau (south of Goritz), the Fella Valley and various points on the Tyrolese front. East of Ploecken Pass (on the Carnia front) Italian positions were penetrated and Italian attacks repulsed near Marter (Sugana Valley).

Severe fighting took place on March 26, 1916, at several points. At the Goritz bridgehead the Austro-Hungarians captured an Italian position fronting on the northern portion of Podgora Heights, taking 525 prisoners. Throughout the entire day and the following night the Italian troops in vain attempted to regain the positions which they had lost the day before east of Ploecken Pass.

In the Doberdo sector on March 27, 1916, the artillery was again active on both sides. Italian attacks on the north slope of Monte San Michele and near the village of San Martino were repulsed. East of Selz a severe engagement developed.

In the Ploecken sector all Italian attacks were beaten back under heavy losses. Before the portion of the Carinthian front held by the Eighth Chasseurs Battalion more than 500 dead Italians were observed. Austro-Hungarian airmen dropped bombs on railroads in the province of Venice.

Especially severe fighting occurred once more in the region of the Gonby bridgehead during March 27, 28 and 29, 1916. On the last of these days the Italians lost some 350 prisoners. Without cessation the guns thundered on both sides on these three days on the Doberdo Plateau, along the Fella and Ploecken sectors, in the Dolomites and to the east of Selz. Scattered Italian attacks at various points failed. Then, with the end of

March, the weather again necessitated a stoppage of military operations.

An interesting description of the territory in which most of this fighting occurred was rendered by a special correspondent of the London "Times" who, in part, says:

"There is no prospect on earth quite like the immense irregular crescent of serrated peak and towering mountain wall that is thrown around Italy on the north, as it unrolls itself from the plains of Lombardy and Venetia. How often one has gazed at it in sheer delight over its bewildering wealth of contrasting color and fantastic form, its effect of light and shade and measureless space! But now, for these many months past, keen eyes have been bent upon it; eyes, not of the artist or the poet, but those of the soldier.

"It was such a pair of military eyes that I had beside me a day or two ago, as I stood upon the topmost roofs of a high tower, in a certain little town in northern Italy, where much history has been made of late; and, since the owner of the eyes was likewise the possessor of a very well-ordered mind and a gift of lucid exposition, I found myself able to grasp the main elements of the extraordinarily complex strategic problem with which the chiefs of the Italian army have had to grapple. As I looked and listened I felt that the chapter which Italy is contributing to the record of the greatest war of all time is one of which she will have every reason to be proud when she has at length brought it to its victorious conclusion.

"There are few such viewpoints as this. In the luminous stillness of a perfect morning of the Italian summer I could look north, and east, and west, upon more than a third of the battle line, that goes snaking among the mountains from near the Swiss frontier to the Adriatic. And what a length of line it is! In England some people seem to think this is a little war that Italy has on hand, little in comparison with the campaigns in France and Russia. But it is not small, weighed even in that exacting balance. The front measures out at over 450 miles, which is not very far short of the length of ribbon of trench and earthwork that is drawn across western Europe.

"Here, as there, every yard is held and guarded. It is true that there is not a continuous row of sentries; for on the Austro-Italian front there are places where the natural barriers are impassable even for the Alpine troops, who will climb to the aerie of the eagles. But wherever nature has not barred the way against both sides alike the trenches and fortified galleries run, stretching across the saddle between two inaccessible peaks, ringing around the shoulder of a mountain, dipping it into the valley, and then rising again to the very summit or passing over it.

"There are guns everywhere—machine guns, mountain guns, field guns, huge guns of position, 6-inch, 10-inch, 12-inch—which have been dragged or carried with all their mountings, their equipment, their tools and appurtenances, up to their stations, it may be, 3,000, 4,000, 6,000 feet above the level. And at those heights are the larders of shell which must always be kept full so that the carnivorous mouths of the man-eaters may not go hungry even for the single hour of the single day which, at any point, an attack may develop.

"Such is the long Italian battle line. When you know what it is you are not surprised that here and there, and now and again, it should bend and give a little before an enemy better supplied with heavy artillery, and much favored by the topographical conditions; for he has the higher mountain passes behind him instead of in front, and is coming down the great Alpine stairway instead of going up.

"That of course is the salient feature of the campaign. The Italians are going up, the Austrians coming, or trying to come, down. On the loftier uplands, range beyond range, in enemy territory, the Austrians before the war had their forts and fortified posts and their strategic roads; and almost everywhere along the front they have observing stations which overlook, at greater or less distance, the Italian lines. Thus the Italians have had to make their advance, and build their trenches, and place their guns, in the face of an enemy who lies generally much above them, sometimes so much above them that he can watch them from his nests of earth and rock as though he were soaring in an aeroplane."

## CHAPTER XXIV

## THE SPRING OF 1916 ON THE AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRONT

**D**URING the early part of the spring of 1916, a large number of engagements took place at many scattered points along the entire Austro-Italian front. Neither side apparently had determined as yet upon any definite plan of operations, or, if they had, they took special pains to avoid a premature disclosure. To a certain extent the fighting which occurred was little more than of a reconnoitering nature. Each side attempted with all the facilities at its command to improve its positions, even if only in a small way, and to find out weak spots in the lines of its adversary. It was only natural that during the process of this type of warfare, fortune should smile one day on one side and turn its back promptly the next day.

During the first week of April, 1916, there was little to report anywhere along the front. On the 6th, however, considerable artillery activity developed along the Isonzo front, where the Italians shelled once more the city of Goritz. This activity gradually increased in vehemence. At the end of about two weeks it decreased slightly for a few days, only to be taken up again with renewed vigor and to be maintained with hardly a break during the balance of April, 1916.

Coincident with this artillery duel there developed a series of violent engagements on the Carso plateau to the east of the lower Isonzo. The first of these occurred on April 12, 1916, when Italian advance detachments approached Austrian trenches between Monte San Michelo and San Martino, wrecking them with hand grenades and bombs. Another engagement of somewhat greater importance occurred on April 22, 1916, east of Selz. Italian infantry, supported by artillery, despite obstinate resistance occupied strong trenches 350 meters long. The Austrians receiving reinforcements, violently counterattacked twice during the night, the second time succeeding in retaking part of the lost



trenches. After a deadly hand-to-hand struggle in which the Austrians suffered severely, the Italians drove them out, capturing 133, including six officers, two machine guns, 200 rifles, several flame throwers, and numerous cases of ammunition and bombs.

The following day, April 23, 1916, Austrian artillery of all calibers violently shelled the trenches occupied east of Selz, obliging the Italians to evacuate a small section north of the Selz Valley, which was especially exposed to the Austrian fire. Another strong attack, supported by a very destructive gunfire was launched by the Austrians against these trenches on April 25, 1916, and enabled them to reoccupy some of the ground previously lost.

Two days later the Italians attempted to regain these positions. At first they succeeded in entering the Austrian trenches on a larger front than they had held originally, but when they manifested an intention to continue the attack, the Austro-Hungarians, by counterattacks drove them into their former positions and even ejected them from these in bitter hand-to-hand fighting, thereby regaining all their former positions.

During the balance of April, and up to May 15, 1916, military operations on the entire Isonzo front were restricted to artillery bombardments, which, however, at various times, became extremely violent, especially so with respect to Goritz and the surrounding positions.

In the next sector, the Doberdo Plateau, much the same condition was prevalent. From the 1st of April, until the middle of May, 1916, there was always more or less artillery activity. Occasionally infantry engagements of varying importance and extent would occur. On April 7, 1916, the Italians were driven back from some advanced saps. South of Mrzlivrh, Austro-Hungarian troops conquered Italian positions, taking forty-three prisoners and one machine gun.

Again on the 9th, hand-to-hand fighting, preceded by bomb throwing, was reported on the Mrzlivrh front. Another attack, launched early in the morning of April 13, 1916, by the Austrians, lasted throughout the day, with varying fortune, but

finally resulted in a success for the Italians. On April 14, 1916, the Austro-Hungarians captured an Italian position at Mrzlivrh and repulsed several counterattacks. The Italians suffered heavy losses. Artillery vigorously shelled the Italian positions at Flitsch and Hontebra.

Other violent engagements took place on the Doberdo Plateau on April 27, May 9, 10, 12, and 13, without, however, having any influence on the general situation.

In all the other sectors very much the same conditions prevailed. Artillery fire was maintained on both sides almost constantly. Infantry attacks were launched wherever and whenever the slightest opportunity offered itself. Scarcely any of these, however, resulted in any noticeable advantage to either side, especially in view of the fact that whenever one side would register a slight gain, the other side immediately would respond by counterattack and frequently nullify all previous successes. Comparatively unimportant and restricted, though, as most of this fighting was, it was so only because it exerted practically no influence on the general situation. On the other hand, it was carried on with the greatest display of valor and persistence that can be imagined and, because of the very nature of the ground on which it occurred, it forms one of the most spectacular periods of the war on the Austro-Italian front.

Of these many local operations there were only a few which developed to such an extent that they need to be mentioned specifically.

One of these was a series of engagements in the Ledro Valley, southwest of Riva and west of Lake Garda. There the Italians on April 11, 1916, by systematic offensive actions, pushed their occupation of the heights north of Rio Tonale, between Concei Valley and Lake Garda. Efficaciously supported by their artillery, their infantry carried with the bayonet a strong line of intrenchments and redoubts along the southern slopes of Monte Pari Cimadoro and the crags of Monte Sperone. On the following day, however, April 12, 1916, the Austro-Hungarians, by violent surprise attacks, succeeded in rushing a part of the trenches taken by the Italians at Monte Sperone. In the even-

ing, after an intense preparation by artillery, Italian infantry counterattacked, reoccupying the lost positions, after a deadly hand-to-hand struggle and extending their occupation to the slopes of Monte Sperone. This was followed by a still further extension on April 16, 1916.

Much of the fighting involved positions on mountain peaks of great height, creating difficulties for both the attacker and the defender, which at first glance appeared to be almost insurmountable. Of this type of warfare in the high mountains, the special correspondent of the London "Times" gives the following vivid description:

"The Italian dispositions are very complete, and it is at this point necessary to say a few words upon Alpini warfare, which the Italians have brought to such a pitch of perfection. They are not the only mountaineers in the world, nor the only people to possess warriors famous on the hillside, but they were the first people in Europe, except the Swiss, to organize mountain warfare scientifically, and in their Alpine groups they possess a force unrivaled for combat in the higher mountains. The Alpini are individualists who think and act for themselves and so can fight for themselves. They are the cream of the army.

"Locally recruited, they know every track and cranny of the hills, which have no terrors for them at any season, and their self-contained groups, which are practically the equivalent of divisions, contain very tough fighters and have achieved remarkable results during the war. Their equipment, clothing, artillery, and transport are all well adapted to mountain warfare, and as the whole frontier has been accurately surveyed, and well studied from every point of view, the Italians are at a great advantage in the hills.

"There is nothing new about these troops, whose turnout and tactics have been a subject of admiration for many years, but in this war much has changed, in the Alps as elsewhere, and the use of the heaviest artillery in the mountains is one of the most striking of these changes. One finds oneself under the fire of twelve-inch howitzers from the other side of mountains 10,000 feet high, and it is no extraordinary experience to find Italian

heavy howitzers sheltering behind precipices rising sheer up several thousand feet, and fighting with Austrian guns ten miles distant, and beyond one, if not two, high ranges of hills. One imagines that the Austrians must have many twelve-inch howitzers to spare, for there are, to give an example, a couple near Mauthen, beyond the crest of the Carnic Alps, and other heavy artillery in the same district hidden in caverns. In these caverns, which are extremely hard to locate, they are secure against shrapnel and cannot be seen by airmen. I fancy the Austrians use galleries with several gun positions, which are used in turn.

"This style of fighting compels the Italians to follow suit, or at least it is supposed to do so, and then, as no road means no heavy guns, there comes in the Italian engineer, the roadmaker, and the mason, and in the art of roadmaking the Italian is supreme.

"They are very wonderful, these mountain roads. They play with the Alps and make impossibilities possible. Thanks to them, and to the *filovia*, or air railway on chains, it is possible to proceed from point to point with great rapidity, and to keep garrisons and posts well supplied. The telephones run everywhere, and observing stations on the highest peaks enable Italian howitzers to make sure of their aim. I am not quite sure whether the Italians do not trust too much to their telephones and will not regret the absence of good flag signalers. When large forces are operating, and many shells bursting, the telephone is often a broken reed. The motor lorries, with about a one and one-half ton of useful load, get about wherever there is a road, and the handy little steam tractors, which make light of dragging the heaviest guns up the steepest gradients, are valuable adjuncts to the defense. At the turns of bad zigzags, the Italians have a remarkable drill for men on the dragropes, and in fact all difficulties have been overcome.

"I recall some Italian batteries mounted at an elevation of about 9,000 feet, of which each gun weighed eleven tons, the carriage five tons, and the platform, which was divided into sections, thirty tons. These guns, the battery officers declared, were brought up from the plains by a new mountain road in



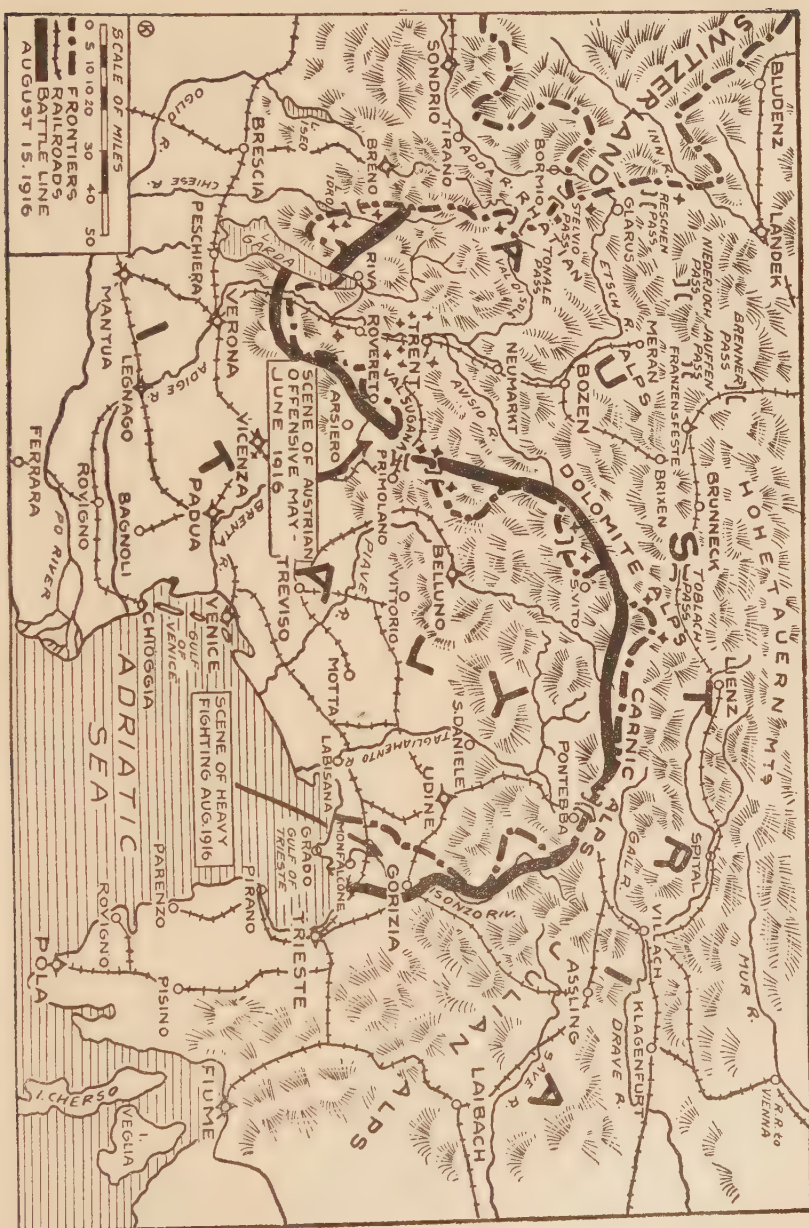
seven hours, and placed in position on these platforms five hours later. It is all a question of roads, but the *filovia* can carry 400 kilos, and any gun under that weight can get up to a peak by way of the air.

"It is all very marvelous and very perfect, and the Italians are also adepts at trench building, and make them most artistically. The only objection I can see to the mountain road is that, when the enemy gets a hold of the territory which they serve, he has the benefit of them. This is true of Trentino operations now, and the enemy has many more roads at his disposal than the old maps show. Sometimes I wonder whether the Italians do not immerse themselves a little too much in these means of war and lose sight a little of the ends, but over nine-tenths of Italy's frontier the war is Alpine, and it must be allowed that Italian soldiers have brought the art of mountain fighting to a degree of perfection which it has never attained before.

"The Italian Alpine group varies in strength and composition. It usually has the local Alpine battalions reenforced by the mountaineers of Piedmont, and completed, when necessary, by line infantry, who usually act in the lower valleys, leaving the high peaks to the mountaineers. Artillery is added according to needs—mountain, field, and heavy—while there are engineers in plenty, and the mule transport is very good.

"The Alpini wear a good hobnailed boot for ordinary service, but for work on the ice the heel of the boot is taken off, and an iron clamp with ice nails substituted. For mountaineering feats they often use *scarpe da gatto*, or cat shoes, made of string soles with felt uppers, which are more lasting than the Pyrenean straw sandals. The *Gavetta*, or mess tin of the Alpini, is very practical. It is of the same shape as ours, but a little deeper, and has a reserve of spirit at the base and a spirit lamp, enabling the Alpini to make coffee or heat their wine. They use racquets or skis on the snow, and carry either the alpenstock or the ice ax.

"I did not realize before coming here that trench warfare, and the close proximity of hostile trenches, had become as usual in the mountains as in the plains. The defenses are, of course, not continuous over such a long, and in parts, impassable line, but



# THE ITALIAN FRONT

tend to concentrate at the passes and other points of tactical importance. But here the adversaries draw together, and one often finds lines only separated by twenty yards.

"The Alpini are usually as much deprived of the power of maneuvering as their comrades in the plains, and all that is left for them is to act by surprise. They have a system of attacking by infiltration forward, not so very dissimilar from Boer methods, and they have a number of devices and surprises which repay study.

"Their enemy is worthy of them, for the chamois hunters, the foresters, the cragsmen of the Austrian Alps are no mean antagonists, as all of us know who have shot and climbed with them. Very fine men, they shoot quick and straight, and when an officer of Alpini tells us not to dally to admire the scenery, because we are within view of an Austrian post within easy range, we recall old days and make no difficulty about complying.

"The Germans trained their Alpine corps here before it went to Serbia, and the Italians made many prisoners from it—Bavarians, Westphalians, and East Prussians. So at least I am told by officers of Alpini who fought with it, and it is certainly proved beyond all doubt that German artillery has been, and is now, cooperating with the Austrians on the Italian front.

"The Alpini hold their positions winter and summer on the highest peaks and have made a great name for themselves. They have lost heavily, and the avalanches have also taken a serious toll of them. One parts with them with regret, for they are indeed very fine fellows, and the war they wage is very hard.

"One point more. Pasubio is not one of the highest peaks in Italian hands, but snow fell there in the end of May and will fall again at the end of August. The time allowed for big things in the Alps by big armies is strictly limited. Also we must remember that there are winter defenses to be made in the snow, and summer defenses to be made in the earth and rock. The Austrians were clever in attacking the other day, just as the snow defenses had crumbled and the summer defenses had not been completed. The barbed-wire chevaux-de-frise are often covered by snow in a night and have to be renewed. When the



snow thaws, all this jumble of obstacles reappears tangled together.

"Other ghastly sights also reappear, like the 600 Austrian corpses on Monte Nero—almost awe-inspiring of heights. They had fallen in the snow which had covered them. In the summer they reappeared one morning in strange attitudes, frozen hard and lifelike, and gave the Italian garrison their first fright."

On April 11, 1916, in the Monte Adamello zone, while a heavy storm was raging, Italian detachments attacked the Austrian positions on the rocky crags of the Lobbia Alta and the Doss di Genova, jutting out from the glaciers at an altitude of 3,300 meters, (10,918 feet). On the evening of April 12, 1916, they completely carried the positions, fortifying themselves in them and taking thirty-one prisoners, including one officer and one machine gun.

The next day, April 13, 1916, saw some severe fighting in the Sugana Valley in the Dolomites, where Italian troops carried with the bayonet, a position at Santosvaldo, west of the Sargan-agna torrent, taking seventy-four prisoners, including five officers.

Three days later, April 17, 1916, Italian Alpine troops in the Monte Adamello zone, occupied and strengthened the Monte Val di Fumo Pass, at an altitude of 3,402 meters (11,161 feet).

During the night of April 18, 1916, one of the most spectacular and important exploits of this period was executed. In the upper Cordevole zone Italian troops, after successful mining operations, attacked Austrian positions on the Col di Lana and occupied the western ridge of Monte Ancora. The Austrian detachment occupying the trenches was mostly killed. The Italians took as prisoners 164 Kaiserjäger, including nine officers.

This successful operation of the Italians was of exceptional importance. The Col di Lana is a mountain 4,815 feet high, which forms a natural barrier in the valley of Livinallengo and protects the road of the Dolomites from Falzarego to the Pordoi Pass and dominates the road to Caprile. The Italians had already occupied Col di Lana, but could not drive the Austrians



from its western peak, where an entire battalion of Alpine troops, Kaiserjäger, was strongly intrenched and protected by semipermanent fortifications with field and machine guns.

It was impossible for the Italians to attack the enemy's positions, within range of the Austrian artillery on Mount Sief, which is nearly on the same level, so the entire western margin of Col di Lana was carefully and patiently mined, an undertaking which probably took months of hard work, and several tons of high explosives were distributed in such a way as to destroy the whole side of the mountain above which the enemy was intrenched.

The explosion that followed was terrific. The earth shook as if rocked by an earthquake, and the havoc wrought was so great that out of the 1,000 Austrians who held the position, only 164 survived.

Of course, the Austrians launched many counterattacks against this new strong position of the Italians. But the latter had fortified it so well that all attempts of their opponents to dislodge them failed.

Considerable further fighting also occurred during the second half of April, 1916, and the first half of May, 1916, in the Adamello zone, adjoining the Camonica Valley, especially in the region of the Tonale Pass. The same was true of the Tofana sector on the upper Boite. But though spectacular, the results were of comparatively small importance.

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## CHAPTER XXV

### THE AUSTRIAN MAY DRIVE IN THE TRENTINO

ABOUT May 15, 1916, the Italians were at the gates of Rovereto, less than twelve miles south of Trent and seriously threatening that city. East of Rovereto the Italian lines ran along the crest of Doss di Somme to the Monte Maggio beyond Val Terragnolo and then northward to Soglio d'Aspio. The Aus-

trian forts of Folgaria and Lavarone compelled the Italians to follow the frontier as far as Val Sugana, where they occupied good strategical positions on Austrian territory and held Ronsego, on the railroad between Borgo and Trent. Further north the Italians held dominating positions in front of the Austrian forts at Fabonti and Monte Cola.

During the preceding months the Austrian forces along the Italian front had gradually been increased, until they now numbered about thirty-eight divisions. Of these, it was estimated that sixteen divisions, or over 300,000 men had been massed by May 15, 1916, between the Adige and Brenta Rivers. Artillery, too, in comparatively great quantity and of as heavy caliber as the country permitted, had been assembled.

Suddenly on May 15, 1916, the Austrians along the Trentino front followed up an intense bombardment which had lasted throughout May 14, 1916, with an attack by large masses of infantry against the Italian positions between the Adige and the upper Astico. Although the Italians valiantly resisted the first onrush they had finally to give way, losing some 2,500 men and sixty-five officers. Austrian troops have occupied Italian positions on Armentara Ridge, south of the Sugana Valley, on the Folgarone Plateau, north of Cagnolo Valley and south of Rovereto. On the Oberdo Plateau they entered trenches east of Monfalcone, capturing five officers and 150 soldiers belonging to five different Italian cavalry regiments.

The following vivid picture of the vehemence of the Austrian attack is given in the "Comere della Sera":

"The Austrians have opened a breach in the wall of defense which we have won by heavy sacrifices beyond our frontier. They have beaten with a hurricane of fire upon our Alpine line at its most delicate point, striving with desperate fury to penetrate into Italian territory. This is the hardest moment of our war; it is also one of the most bitter and violent assaults of the whole European war.

"The battle rages furiously. The Austrian attack is being made with colossal forces in the narrow zone between the Adige and the Val Sugana. The enemy had assembled fourteen divisions

of his best troops. An Austrian officer who was taken prisoner said:

“‘You are not far from the truth in reckoning that there are three hundred thousand men against you. These comprise the armies of Dankl, Koevess, and the Boroevic, and these armies are served by unlimited artillery. More than two thousand pieces are raining on a twenty-five-mile front projectiles of all calibers.’”

“On Sunday morning, May 14, 1916, three shadows approached the Italian trenches. As they advanced they were recognized as Austrian Slav deserters. They said:

“‘The attack has been ordered for to-morrow. The bombardment will last from dawn to 6 p. m., when the infantry will attack.’

“The information was exact. A bombardment of incredible violence began. Aeroplanes regulated the fire of a 15-inch naval gun, which sent five projectiles on the town of Asiago. After the bombardment had ceased the first infantry attack came. The troops attacked *en masse*, and at the same time attacks were made from the Adige to the Val Sugana. Four onslaughts were made on Zugna Torta. Our machine guns cut down the blue masses of men; the wire entanglements were heaped with dead. The bombardment had destroyed all the first-line trenches. The infantry then hurled itself against the advance posts of the Val Terragnolo. The Alpini, deafened by twelve hours of bombardment, defended every foot of the ground, fighting always in snow. Three terrible bayonet counterattacks lacerated the Austrian lines, but the assailants were innumerable, and no help could come, as the entire front was in action. The Alpini who remained, so few in number, threw themselves on the enemy again, permitting the retirement of the main body to the line running from Malga Milegna to Soglio d’Aspio. Even here there was one avalanche of fire. The enemy artillery had been pouring explosives on these positions for ten hours. The enemy infantry here attacking were annihilated and the enemy dead filled the valleys, but fresh troops swarmed up from all parts.

“Night fell on the first day’s slaughter.”

The following day, May 16, 1916, the Austrians attacked again the Italian positions on the northern slopes of the Zugna Torta in the Lagarina Valley in five assaults. In the zone between the Val Terragnolo and the upper Astico a violent concentrated fire from the Austrian artillery of all calibers forced the Italians to abandon their advanced positions. In the Asiago sector persistent attacks were repulsed. In the Sugana Valley the Austrians vigorously attacked between the Val Maggio bridgehead and Monte Collo. The prisoners taken by the Austrians were increased to forty-one officers and 6,200 men, and the booty to seventeen machine guns and thirteen guns. Along the whole remaining front there was artillery fire. Sporadic infantry attacks were made in the San Pellegrino Valley, the upper But, at Monte Nero, Mrzli, the Tolmino zone, the northern slopes of Monte San Michele, the region east of Selz, and Monfalcone.

Austrian aeroplanes shelled Castel Tesino, Capedaletto, Montebelluna, and the stations at Carnia and Gemona. Italian aeroplanes shelled Dellach and Kotsschach in the Gail Valley.

The shelling of Zugna Torta was renewed on May 17, 1916, when five attacks against the Italian positions were repulsed with heavy losses.

Meanwhile artillery fire continued against the Italian positions between Val Terragnolo and the upper Astico. After three days of intense and uninterrupted artillery fire the Italians abandoned their positions on Zugna Torta on May 18, 1916, but repulsed two attacks against their positions further south. The Italians also abandoned their line of resistance between Monte Soglio d'Aspio and retired upon other prepared positions.

Zugna Torta, the ridge running down upon Rovereto, between Val Lagarina and Vallarsa, was a dangerously exposed salient. The western slopes were commanded by the fire of the Austrian artillery positions at Biaena, north of More, on the western side of Val Lagarina, and the rest of the position lay open to Ghello and Fenocchio, east of Rovereto. The Italians had never been able to push forward their lines on either side of this salient. Biaena blocked the way on the west, and the advance east of Vallarsa was held up by the formidable group of fortifications



on the Folgaria Plateau. When the Austrians attacked Zugna Torta, under cover of a converging artillery fire, the position quickly became untenable.

On the same day the Austrians, for the first time since the beginning of hostilities between Italy and Austria, crossed the Italian frontier in the Lago di Garda region and established themselves on the Costabella, a ridge of the Monte Baldo, between the lake and the Lagarina Valley. At this point, where the Austrian offensive met with the greatest success, the Italians were driven back four miles from the positions on Austrian soil which they occupied at the opening of the attack and which they had held early in the war.

The Austrian advance was well maintained on the following day, May 19, 1916, when the Italians were driven from their positions on the Col Santo, almost directly to the west of Monte Maggio captured the day before, between the Val di Terragnolo and the Vallarsa.

By that time the number of Italians taken prisoners by the Austrians since May 15, 1916, had increased to 257 officers and 13,000 men and the booty to 109 guns, including twelve howitzers, and sixty-eight machine guns.

An Austrian dispatch forwarded at that time from Trent tells of the violent fighting which was in progress in the zone of Monte Adamello and the Tonale Pass and gives a description of the capture by the Austrians of an unarmed mountain in this region.

The preparatory bombardment was begun at three o'clock in the afternoon, the Italian guns making only a desultory reply. The bombardment was continued until after sunset, when the Austrian infantry began to move forward from the direction of Fort Strino, on the Noce River, northeast of the Tonale Pass, guided by searchlights and star shells.

The seasoned Austrian troops encountered an extremely heavy machine-gun and rifle fire as they climbed the slope, using their bayonets to give them support on the slippery ground, but continued the advance, and near the summit engaged the Italian defenders in a hand-to-hand combat, and after an hour of

bayonet fighting drove the Italians from their positions. Both sides engaging in the encounter lost heavily, according to the dispatch.

According to Rome dispatches the Austrian troops were under the command of the Austrian heir-apparent, Archduke Charles Francis Joseph, as well as Field Marshal Count von Hoetben-dorff, chief of the Austrian General Staff. General Cadorna, the Italian commander in chief, was also said to have established his headquarters on the Trentino front to take personal command of the defense.

The special correspondent of the London "Times" describes the fighting in the Trentino at this period as follows:

"It is the fifth day of the Austrian offensive. 'We have an action in progress,' says the colonel. The night is clear and mild. A moon, full red, is rising on the horizon. Headquarters are located in an ancient Austrian feudal castle, which crowns a hilltop. At our feet the valley spreads out, and the mountain-chains to the right and left seem to meet at an angle in the west. Here a blackened mountain mass dominates the valley. It is the Panarotta, the stronghold of the enemy.

"'The eye of the Austrians,' a young officer exclaims, as from the crest a beam of light breaks forth, flaring with great intensity on the Italian positions lower down. Immediately an Italian light endeavors to shine directly in the path of the Austrian light and blind its rays. Another Austrian light darts forth from across the valley. Promptly an Italian searchlight gives battle. Thus for more than an hour the opposing searchlights endeavor to intercept one another. To-night the Austrians are on the offensive. Their lights sweep the hillcrests, pursued by Italian rays.

"The moon is now high in the heavens, the snow-clad peaks, the shadowy ravines, the villages within Italian lines, as well as those beyond the invisible ring of steel, are bathed in a silvery light. We are standing less than four miles from the advanced enemy positions. The stage is set, the battle is about to begin. Information brought in during the day tells of fresh units of the enemy, massed in second line. Deserters, surrendering to Italian

patrols, report that an important action is impending. The general commanding bids us good night. ...

"We make our way on foot through quiet country lanes. Through the trees, the glimmer of the searchlights' flashes comes and goes like giant fireflies. The clear notes of a nightingale ring out in the stillness of the night. Nestling in the valley lies a large town, which only a fortnight ago was filled with civilians, 'redeemed Italians,' who had enjoyed eight months of prosperity and liberty under Italian rule. Now these have been evacuated and scattered in the four corners of Italy, and the deserted houses and empty streets add to the unreality of the scene. The whirring of the field-telephone wires which hang low, hastily looped over the branches of olive and mulberry trees, alone indicates any activity of man. There are no troops in sight, save a patrol which stops us and examines our papers. It seems difficult to realize that a great battle is impending. No scene could be more peaceful. In the marshes, frogs are croaking in loud unison. The scent of new-mown hay is wafted across the valley.

"The minutes hang heavily. A half hour passes. An hour seems interminable. This afternoon, beyond the mountains, in the next valley, not more than nine miles away as the crow flies, a bloody action was fought. Not a sound of the cannonade reached us; what had happened there we did not know, for the Austrians are attacking from a single base, and their battle line is not more than fifteen miles long, pivoting on a central position, whereas the Italian forces in this same sector are compelled, by the configuration of the mountains and the intersecting valleys, to fight separate actions which can only be co-ordinated with utmost difficulty.

"Shortly before one o'clock in the morning the Austrian batteries open fire. From the west, the north, the east, the hail of shell and shrapnel tears open the crest of the hill, the Monte Collo, against which the attack is directed. So intense an artillery fire has not hitherto been witnessed on the Italian front; 380's, 305's, 240's, 149's, 105's rain upon the short line of Italian intrenchments.

"For more than three hours the bombardment continues. The Italian guns apparently refrain from answering. But every battery is in readiness, every Italian gun is trained on the spot where the enemy must pass. Every man is at his post, waiting, waiting. It is just before dawn. The air of this Alpine Valley is cold and raw. A bleak wind blows through the trees. The cannonade slackens. From our position we cannot see the enemy advancing, but the black, broad strip of newly-upturned soil on the crest of the Monte Collo shows the effect of the bombardment. Split wide open like a yawning crater, the hilltop has been plowed up in every direction. Barbed wire, parapets, and trench lines have disappeared, buried under the tangled earth clumps.

"A minute, perhaps five or ten! 'They are coming,' is whispered in the observation post. A thunder of Italian artillery greets the attacking forces. On they come. Instinctively one can discern a shadowy mass moving forward. Huddled together, they crouch low. Shells are falling and then cease, and the 'click,' 'click,' of the machine gun's enfilading fire is heard. The enemy reaches the Italian advance trenches. The first streaks of light, gray and cold, show new attacking forces coming up over the hill. They penetrate deep into the plowed soil. They seem to hold the hill. Stumbling through the cratered terrain the Austrians advance toward the Italian positions. Then from out of the tawny earth an Italian battalion springs up. One can almost imagine that one hears their hoarse battle cry, 'Avanti, Savoia! Avanti!' as they fall upon their enemies.

"We learn later that the losses have been heavy. The Italian possessions have been badly damaged and have been temporarily evacuated. Both sides have taken prisoners, and what was the battle ground is now a neutral zone. Some hours later I again look across to the Monte Collo. The hill crest is deserted. Below the summit fresh Italian troops are occupying new and stronger positions, while an endless stream of pack-mules is winding slowly up the mountainside."

On May 20, 1916, the battles in southern Tyrol, on the Lavarone Plateau, increased in violence as the result of Italian at-



tacks. The Austrians reached the summit of the Armentara Ridge and on the Lavarone Plateau penetrated the first hostile position.

The troops of Archduke Charles Francis Joseph also added to their successes. They captured the Cima dei Laghi and the Cima di Nesole. The Italians also were driven from the Borgola Pass toward the south and lost three more twenty-eight centimeter howitzers and 3,000 men, 84 officers, 25 guns and 8 machine guns.

Austrian aeroplanes dropped bombs on Vicenza.

Although the Italian line still held in the main, it could not deny Austrian advances at certain important points. Slowly the Austro-Hungarians pushed on everywhere toward the Italian frontier. On May 21, 1916, an attack of the Graz Corps on Lavarone Plateau was attended with complete success. The Italians were driven from their entire position. Other Austrian troops captured Fima, Mandriolo and the height immediately west of the frontier from the summit as far as the Astico Valley.

The troops of Archduke Charles Francis Joseph reached the Monte Tormino Majo line.

Between the Astico and Brenta, in the Sugana Valley, the Austrian attacks likewise continued, supported by powerful artillery, against advanced lines in the west valleys of Terra Astico, Doss Maggio and Campelle.

Since the beginning of the offensive 23,883 Italians, among whom are 482 officers, had now been captured and the number of cannon taken had been increased to 172.

Between Lake Garda and the Adige large Austrian forces were massed on May 22, 1916, in the Riva zone. There was also considerable aerial activity on that day on Monte Baldo (the mountain ridge to the east of the lake). From the Adige to the Astico there were only reconnoiterings. Between the Astico and the Brenta Rivers in the Sugana Valley, the Italians were again forced to fall back gradually on their main lines after repulsing heavy attacks throughout the day. The retreat, however, was orderly and spontaneous.

Besides accomplishing their advance in the Val Sugana, the Austrians continued the reduction of the forts protecting Arsiero, well across the Italian frontier on the way toward Vicenza. Arsiero is the terminus of a railway leading down into the Vicenza plain and the city of Vicenza. Through the capture of the Spitz Tonezza and Monte Melignone the Austrians now held the entire line across the frontier as far as Forni on the Astico. They also pushed their advance toward the ridge north of the Val dei Laghi, and toward Monte Tormino and Monte Cremone, all three outlying defenses of Arsiero. Meanwhile the right wing of the Austrian army, after storming Col Santo, had moved toward Monte Pasubio, and the left wing had stormed the Sasso Alto, commanding the Armentara Ridge, enabling the Austrians to advance into the Sugana Valley and to take Roncegno.

In order to appreciate the difficulties connected with all of this fighting, it must be remembered that the fighting is going on in the mountains, on ground varying in altitude as much as 5,000 feet per mile. The mountains were still partly covered with snow and the transportation of supplies, therefore, was exceedingly difficult.

As the month of May drew to its end, the Austrian advance spread steadily. By May 23, 1916, the Austrians had occupied north of the Sugana Valley the ridge from Salubio to Borgo. On the frontier ridge south of the valley the Italians were driven from Pompeli Mountain. Further south the Italians successfully defended the heights east of the Val d'Assa and the fortified district Asiago and Arsiero. The armored work of Campolono, however, fell into Austro-Hungarian hands. The Austro-Hungarian troops approached more closely the Val d'Assa and Posina Valley.

Orderly as the Italian retreat was, it was nevertheless a hasty one. For the official Italian report for May 23, 1916, admits that artillery "that could not be removed" was destroyed.

Both the violence and unexpectedness of the Austrian attacks are testified to by articles published at this time in Italian newspapers. A writer in the "*Giornale d'Italia*" of Rome says that

"the Austrian offensive came as a surprise to the Italian command and the taking of Monte Maggio and other important positions was possible, because the Italians were not looking for so heavy an attack."

A correspondent of the "Corriere della Sera" of Milan, writing of the extensive preparations made by the Austrians for the present offensive, says "that the Austrians massed 2,000 guns, mostly of large caliber, on the twenty-four-mile front attacked."

Though it was now scarcely more than a week since the beginning of the Austrian offensive, 24,400 Italians had been made prisoners, among them 524 officers, and 251 cannon; 101 machine guns had been taken.

The Italians, of course, appreciated fully the deeper meaning of this Austrian offensive. They understood that the Austrian objective was not simply to reduce the Italian pressure on Trent or to drive the Italians out of southern Tyrol, but to advance themselves into Italy. At the same time, Italy also knew that, though such an advance was not an impossibility, its successful accomplishment for any great distance or duration would be seriously handicapped by the fact that the preponderance of numbers was unquestionably on the Italian and not the Austrian side. This confidence found expression in an order of the day issued at this junction by King Victor Emmanuel in which he says:

"Soldiers of land and sea: Responding with enthusiasm to the appeal of the country a year ago, you hastened to fight, in conjunction with our brave allies, our hereditary enemy and assure the realization of our national claims.

"After having surmounted difficulties of every nature, you have fought in a hundred combats and won, for you have the ideal of Italy in your heart. But the country again asks of you new efforts and more sacrifices.

"I do not doubt that you will know how to give new proofs of bravery and force of mind. The country, proud and grateful, sustains you in your arduous task by its fervent affections, its calm demeanor and its admirable confidence.

"I sincerely hope that fortune will accompany us in future battles, as you accompany my constant thoughts."

Still further Austrian successes were reported on May 24, 1916. In the Sugana Valley they occupied the Salubio Ridge and drove the Italians from Kempel Mountain.

In the Lagarina Valley, after an intense night bombardment, Austrian forces attacked twice toward Serravalle and Col di Buole, but were vigorously repulsed. Next morning the attack on Col di Buole was renewed with fresh troops, but again repulsed with heavy loss. Italian troops followed up this repulse and reoccupied the height of Darmeson, southeast of Col di Buole.

Between the Val d'Assa and Posina the Austrians, after having kept Italian positions at Pasubio under violent bombardment, launched a night attack with strong columns of infantry, which were mowed down by Italian fire and thrown back in disorder. Between Posina and the Astico the Austrians unmasked their heavy artillery along the Monte Maggio-Toraro line, but Italian guns replied effectively.

On May 25, 1916, the Austro-Hungarians occupied the Cima Cista, crossed the Maso rivulet and entered Strigno in the Val Sugana, four miles northeast of Borgo and a little less than that distance southeast of Salubio, with the Maso stream between. They also captured the Corno di Campo Verde to the east of Grigno, on the Italian border and occupied Chiesa on the Vallarsa Plateau, southwest of Pasubio.

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## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE RISE AND FAILURE OF THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN DRIVE

BY May 26, 1916, the center of the Austro-Hungarian army was sweeping down toward Arsiero, while another strong force further west was within ten miles of the Italian city of Schio. Both of these points are terminals of the railroad system of which Vicenza is the center. That day some of the ar-



mored works of Arsiero and some strongly fortified positions southwest of Bacarola were captured and Monte Mochicce was occupied. Another Austrian success was the capture of the entire mountain range from Corno di Campo Verde to Montemeata (in the Val d'Assa). The Italians suffered sanguinary losses and also lost more than 2,500 prisoners, four guns, four machine guns, 300 bicycles and much other material.

In the Monte Nero zone on the night of May 26, 1916, the Austro-Hungarians attacked Italian trenches near Vrsic and succeeded in gaining a temporary foothold. When reenforcements arrived, after a violent counterattack, the Italians drove out the enemy, taking some prisoners and machine guns.

The natural difficulties in the way of the Austro-Hungarian invaders were so manifold and severe that it appeared at times as if the offensive had come to a standstill. However, this was not the case. Slowly but surely it progressed and as it progressed it even spread out. Thus on May 27, 1916, the Austrians not only captured a fortification at Coronolo, west of Arsiero, and also a barricade in the Assa Valley, southwest of Monte Interrotto, but also carried their offensive further toward the west until it included the northern end of Lake Garda.

Again on May 28, 1916, the Italians had to give way. The Austrians crossed the Assa Valley near Roana, four and a half miles southwest of Asiago. They also repulsed Italian attacks near Canove, between Asiago and Schio, and occupied the southern slopes and captured the fortifications on the Monte Ingrotto heights, north of Asiago, after having taken Monte Cebio, Monte Sieglarella and the Corno di Campo Bianco. In the upper Posina Valley the Italians were driven out of their positions west and south of Webalen.

With renewed vigor the Austrians attacked on May 29, 1916. As a result the armored work of Punta Gorda fell into their hands, and west of Arsiero they forced the crossing of the Posina Brook and occupied the heights on the southern bank in the face of determined Italian resistance.

The next day, May 30, 1916, Austrian troops, northeast of Asiago, drove the Italians from Gallio and stormed positions on

the heights northward. Monte Baldo and Monte Fiaara fell into their hands. West of Asiago the Austrian line south of the Assa Valley was advanced to the conquered Italian position of Punta Gorda. The troops which had crossed the day before the Posina took Monte Priafora.

This brought the Austrians so near to Asiago that the Italians deemed it wise to evacuate this town, holding, however, the hills to the east. In spite of the gradual advance of the Austrian center, the Italian wings held and severely punished the attacking Austrians. This was made possible by the admirable Italian motor transports which enabled the Italian command to bring up great reenforcements and stop the gap made in the first line. The most serious loss which they suffered was that of the big guns the Italians were obliged to abandon on the Monte Maggio-Spitz Tonezza line.

The Austrian offensive was now in its second week. So far it had yielded in prisoners 30,388 Italians, including 694 officers and 299 cannon.

Reviewing the Austro-Hungarian offensive up to this point, the military critic of the Berlin "Tageblatt" says:

"The Austro-Hungarian advance is in progress on a front of thirty-one miles between the Adige and the Brenta. This is about the same distance as the front between Gorlice and Tarnow, in Galicia, over which the offensive against the Russians was conducted thirteen months ago.

"The general direction of the advance is toward the Italian line running through Asiago, Arsiero, and Schio, which up to the present time had been protected by advanced positions. This line represents the third and last fortified defensive position, the strategic object of which is to prevent an invasion of the Venetian plain.

"The Austro-Hungarian troops already have disposed of the loftiest heights, which presents a situation favorable to them. When the heavy artillery has been brought into place there will be visible evidence of this.

"The total Italian casualties thus far are not less than 80,000 men. The loss of more than 200 cannon is exceedingly serious

for the Italians, since they cannot be replaced during the war."

In spite of the fact that on May 30, 1916, the Austrians had forced their way across the Posina torrent between Posina and Arsiero and succeeded in partly enveloping the latter, a force which attempted to take Sant' Ubaldo, immediately southeast of Arsiero, on May 31, 1916, was driven back by the Italians beyond the Posina, thus relieving the strongest pressure on the town. A little further west another Austrian force attacked the Italian positions on Monte Spin, southeast of Posina. The Italian lines held on the mountain slopes and the Austrian advance here was checked. West of Posina an Austrian assault on Monte Forni Alti was repulsed. On the Sette Comuni Plateau, where the Austrians were advancing against Asiago, they began operations against the Italian positions on Monte Cengio and Campo Niulo.

On June 1, 1916, however, the Austro-Hungarians in the Arsiero region captured Monte Barro and gained a firm footing on the south bank of the Posina torrent. Repeated night attacks along the Posina front against the northern slopes of Monte Forni Alti and in the direction of Quaro, southwest of Arsiero, were repulsed.

All day long an intense uninterrupted bombardment by Austrian batteries of all calibers was maintained against the Italian lines in the Col di Xomo-Rochette sector (southwest of Posina).

On the left wing the Austrians, leaving massed heavy forces between Posina and Fusine (in the Posina Valley, east of Posina), made numerous efforts to advance toward Monte Spin.

On the right wing strong Austro-Hungarian columns in the afternoon launched a violent attack against Segheschiri. These were completely repulsed after a fierce engagement.

In the uplands of the Sette Comuni there was an intense and obstinate struggle along the positions south of the Assa Valley as far as Asiago. Italian troops holding the Monte Cengio Plateau determinedly withstood powerful infantry attacks supported by a most violent bombardment.

On the front parallel with the Asiago-Guglio-Valle road near Campo Mullo the Italians gained ground by a violent counter-offensive in spite of the strong Austrian resistance.

Intense artillery and infantry fighting along the Trentino front continued unabated on June 2, 1916, and according to the official Italian statement the Austrian offensive in some places was checked. The Austrian infantry on Zugna Torta was scattered by the fierce Italian infantry fire.

Around Asiero and on the Asiago Plateau in Italy, the Italians repulsed Austrian infantry. The Belmonte position northeast of Monte Cengio, where the struggle was fiercest and which was repeatedly taken and lost, was finally definitely occupied by the Italians.

Several Italian towns, including Vicenza and Verona, were attacked by Austrian aeroplanes, while Italian air squadrons in a raid on objects of military importance in the lower Astico Valley, dropped 100 bombs on various enemy camps and munition depots.

The next day, June 3, 1916, the Austrian attack once more found fresh impetus. In spite of desperate Italian resistance on the ridge south of the Posina Valley and before Monte Cengio, on the Asiago front, south of Monte Cengio, considerable ground was won and the town of Cesuna was captured. Italian counter-attacks were repulsed.

During this one day 5,600 prisoners, including seventy-eight officers, were taken and three cannon, eleven machine guns and 126 horses were captured.

In the region west of the Astico Valley fighting activity was generally less pronounced on June 4, 1916, than it had been during the preceding days. South of Posina Austrian troops took a strong point of support and repulsed several Italian counterattacks.

East of the Astico Valley, Austrian groups situated on the heights east of Arsiero stormed Monte Panoccio (east of Monte Barco) and thereby gained command of the Canaglio Valley.

Considerable fighting occurred on June 5, 1916, without, however, resulting in any important changes. Austro-Hungarian



attacks, preceded by intensive artillery fire, were launched all along the Trentino front, but were met everywhere with determined Italian resistance. Italian aeroplanes attacked the railway stations of San Bona di Piava, Livenca and Lati Sana, while Austrian airmen bombed the stations of Verona, Ala and Vicenza.

Since June 1, 1916, 9,700 Italians, including 184 officers, had been captured, as well as thirteen machine guns and five cannons.

On June 6, 1916, activities were restricted to artillery duels, although the Austrians southwest of Asiago continued the attack near Cesuna and captured Monte del Busiballo, southwest of Cesuna.

More and more it became evident now that the force of the Austrian offensive had been spent. The pressure on the Italian center in the Trentino front gradually diminished as a result of the determined Italian resistance, which had made impossible an equal progress of the Austrian wings. Possibly, too, the great Russian offensive on the southeastern front made itself felt even now. At any rate, there was a decided slowing down of infantry attacks. At one point, however, on the Sette Comuni Plateau, the battle raged along the whole front. On the evening of June 6, 1916, after an intense artillery preparation, the Austro-Hungarians made repeated attacks against Italian positions south and southwest of Asiago. The action, raging fiercely throughout the night of June 6-7, ended in the morning of June 7th with the defeat of the Austrian columns. During the afternoon the Austrians renewed their violent efforts against the center and right wing of the Italian positions. Preceded by the usual intense bombardment, dense infantry masses repeatedly launched assaults against positions south of Asiago, east of the Campo Mulo Valley, but were always repulsed with heavy losses.

Concerning the Austro-Hungarian troops who had carried this offensive into Italy, the special correspondent of the London "Times" says:

"Trench warfare, for the time being, has been abandoned here. Trench lines no longer count.

"Great troop masses are maneuvering in the open, through the valleys and gorges, swarming over the summits of these mountains. The Austrians dare advance only as far as the long arm of their guns will reach, and are bending all their energy to bring up these guns. It is a gigantic task, and the skill of the enemy commander in holding together and coordinating his attacks, now that his troops have entered these defiles, must be acknowledged.

"It is sledge-hammer tactics, so dear to the Prussians, that the Austrian commanders have adopted, and from the general aspect of their plans, it would appear that these were prepared and matured in Berlin rather than in Vienna.

"How long can it last? How long before the Austrian effort will have spent itself?" are the questions that are being asked here as the second week of this great battle is drawing to a close. For, unlike Verdun, it is not a fortress that is being assaulted, but a great drive, carried on by siege methods. Not converging on a single center, but radiating, like sticks of a fan, from a central base.

"So much has been written regarding the exhaustion of the resources of the Dual Monarchy, not only of materials, but of men. In how far is this true?

"To deal first with the question of ordnance. The Austrians, it is estimated by competent experts, have well over 2,000 pieces of artillery in action along this battle line. These include a great number of heavy-caliber guns. Naval guns, with an extreme length of range, are being used with great skill throughout the engagement. Kept in reserve, and silent, though posted close up to the firing line, they have had a disconcerting effect, in that their fire has reached far behind the Italian lines at intervals between the attacks, firing shots at random which did little actual damage, but gave the impression of continued advance. With the front of this battle line extending now to a length of twenty-two miles, the artillery of the enemy works out at nearly 100 pieces to the mile, or one gun every twenty yards.

"The shells fired by this artillery are of excellent workmanship. I have on my table as I write a fragment of a 10-inch shell

which I picked up here. It is rent in deep fissures, which would prove, according to competent authority, that the explosive materials used are good. 'The Austrians fired away all their bad shells during preliminary actions,' was the comment of a young staff officer who is in the habit of recording the efficiency of enemy shells. But it is quantity as well as quality which the enemy is relying upon.

"'Twenty thousand shells were fired against my position the first two days of the engagement,' an Alpini major, commanding a small knoll, remarked to me. Using this as a basis, it would not be far from the truth to assert that over 1,000,000 shells have been fired by the enemy in the present battle, and there is as yet no slackening of effort.

"And the troops? This morning a group of some 250 Austrians, taken during the action last night, are in this village. They are divided in squads of twenty-five, each in charge of an Austrian noncommissioned officer. The men had had six hours' rest before I saw them. These prisoners are Rumanians from Transylvania. They are young, well-set-up troops. They are naturally glad to be prisoners, though their captors tell me that they fought valiantly. The equipment of these men is new, and I was struck by the excellent quality of their boots; high, new leather, thick mountain boots. In fact, all their leather accouterments are new, and of good leather. Their uniforms are in many cases of heavy cotton twill, very tough, and resisting the hard mountain fighting better than the usual cloth uniform. Nearly every man has an overcoat, which is of stout new cloth. Only five or six of the men are without caps. None have helmets of any kind, but all wear the soft cap with ear flaps tied back. According to answers given to the interpreter, they are of the class of 1915, and have seen fighting in Galicia.

"Asked about their food, they replied that they did not get enough to eat, but their looks belied their statements. Whatever may be the truth in regard to the meatless and fatless days in the Hapsburg Empire, the armies in the field are not suffering in this respect, and, though the civilians at home are now put on strict rations, their soldiers' rations, in this sector at least, have





TAKEN BY AUSTRIANS  
MAY 28-30. RETAKEN  
BY ITALIANS JUNE  
25-27. 1916



not been cut down. I was shown small tins of meat, taken from the knapsack of a prisoner, and several carried 3-ounce tins of a good quality of butter. In another sector I saw Bosnian prisoners wearing a gray fez, and looking much like Turkish troops. They also impressed me as very fit men; in fact, all the prisoners taken recently would seem to be of strong fiber, and far better equipped than Austrian troops which I have seen elsewhere.

"It is evident that the Austrian commanders have assembled the picked troops of the Dual Monarchy for the storming of these Trentino heights. Everything would point to the fact that they are making a supreme and final effort to win the war. Prisoners confirm this by stating that the war cannot go on much longer.

"Are the last good reserves being used up in this battle? Yesterday morning an Italian patrol coming in from the night's tour of inspection of their positions bring in a prisoner. He is a burly, thick-lipped peasant boy of twenty, dressed in a Russian uniform. On his loose-fitting blouselike tunic, torn in many places, is pinned a black and yellow ribbon, and hanging from a thin remaining strand shines the silver medal of St. George. An Italian subaltern takes charge of the prisoner.

"A Russian refugee,' the officer remarks, in answer to my look of surprise at the sight of a Russian prisoner being brought in by an Italian patrol on the Trentino front. The Russian smiles good-naturedly, as he feels secure, now that he is among friends. In due time he will be repatriated, or perhaps join the Russian corps in France. We leave him busy over a big bowl of macaroni.

"There are close to 20,000 Russian prisoners of war employed by the Austrians along our front, repairing roads, making trenches, and engaged on other 'noncombatant military duties,' the officer informed me. 'A few manage to escape into our lines nearly every day, but many more Russian dead lie in the silent crevasses of our high mountains who have lost their lives while attempting to escape.

"You see, they need the men,' he concluded, as we watched an endless stream of fresh Italian troops winding their way up from the valley."

## CHAPTER XXVII

THE ITALIAN COUNTEROFFENSIVE  
IN THE TRENTINO

HARDLY had the Austro-Hungarian offensive shown signs of weakening when the Italians themselves began to attack the invaders. The first indication of this change was gleaned from the wording of the official statements, covering military operations on the Italian front for June 9, 1916. No longer is there any mention of Austro-Hungarian advances, but on the contrary this term appears now in the reports concerning the military operations of the Italian troops, who are also reported as "making attacks." Of course, this turn in affairs developed slowly in the beginning.

Thus, although on June 9, 1916, the Italian troops attacked at many points along the entire front between the Adige and Brenta Rivers, most of these attacks were repulsed by the Austro-Hungarians, who were still able to claim the capture of some 1,600 prisoners. At the same time Italian forces began to push back the invaders at some points and were able to advance in the upper Arsa Valley in the Monte Novegno region, between the Posina and Val d'Astico, as well as on the western slopes of Monte Cengio. Artillery duels were maintained along the entire balance of the front to the sea. Austrian aeroplanes dropped bombs on various localities in the Venetian plain, while an Italian squadron shelled Austro-Hungarian positions in the Arsa Valley and the Val d'Astico.

Much the same was the result of the fighting on June 10 and 11, 1916. On the former day the Austro-Hungarians concentrated their efforts still more and restricted themselves to an attack against a small portion of the Italian front southeast of Asiago. After an intense bombardment strong forces numbering about one division repeatedly attacked the Monte Lemerle positions. They were repulsed with very heavy losses by counter-attacks.

From the Adige to the Brenta the Italian offensive action was increasing. Infantry, effectively supported by artillery, made fresh progress along the Vallarsa height, south of the Posina, in the Astico Valley, at the Frenzela Valley bridgehead, on the Asiago Plateau, and to the left of the Maso torrent.

During the following day Austro-Hungarian artillery intensely bombarded the Italian positions near Conizugna in the Lagarina Valley. In the Arsa Valley, in the Pasubio sector, on the Posina, and on the Astico line Italian infantry advance continued despite violent artillery fire and a snowstorm.

Two Austrian counterattacks toward Forni Alti and Campigliazione were repulsed with very heavy losses. In the plateau of the Sette Comuni, southwest of Asiago, Italian advanced detachments, after passing the Caraglia Valley, progressed toward the southeastern slopes of Monte Cengio, Monte Barco, and Monte Busibello. In the Sugana Valley detachments progressed toward the Maso torrent, repulsing two Austrian counterattacks near Sucrelle. Along the remainder of the front there were artillery duels and bomb-throwing activity by small detachments. Austrian aeroplanes dropped bombs on Vicenza, hitting the military hospital, and also attacked Thiene, Venice, and Mestre, causing slight damage.

Still further ground was gained by the Italian forces on June 12, 1916, in spite of the most obstinate resistance.

In the Lagarina Valley, by a strong attack after artillery preparation, the Italians carried the strongly fortified line from Parmesan, east of the Cima Mezzana, to Rio Romini. The Austro-Hungarians immediately launched violent counterattacks, but were always repulsed.

Along the Posina-Astico front there was an intense bombardment by both sides. Austrian infantry, which succeeded in penetrating Molisini, was driven out by gunfire, pursued and dispersed.

In the Sugana Valley on the night of June 12, 1916, and the following morning, Austrian detachments attempting to advance east of the Maso torrent were repulsed with very heavy losses.

Once more the Austro-Hungarians attempted to wrest the initiative from their opponents, without, however, succeeding to any extent. On the Posina front on the evening of June 12, 1916, after violent artillery preparation, they attacked Monte Forni Alti, the Campiglia (both southwest of Posina), Monte Ciove and Monte Brazonne (both south of Arsiero), but were everywhere repulsed with heavy losses.

During the day they bombarded with numerous batteries of all calibers the Italian positions along the whole front from the Adige to the Brenta, especially in the Monte Novegno zone. The Italian troops firmly withstood the violent fire and repelled infantry detachments which attempted to advance.

Austro-Hungarian hydroaeroplanes attacked the station and military establishments at San Giorgio di Nogaro, as well as the inner harbor at Grado.

More and more it became evident that the Austro-Hungarian drive in the Trentino region had definitely been stopped or abandoned. From time to time, it is true, the Austrians returned to the offensive. But this was always of local importance only and restricted in strength and extent. The Italians, on the other hand, not only maintained their new offensive movement, but even extended gradually its sphere.

Two attempted attacks by the Austro-Hungarian forces in the region of Monte Novegno, made in the direction of Monte Ciove and Monte Brazonne, were repulsed. But on Monte Lemerle, against which the Austrians had launched without success a very violent attack only a few days before, they now surprised a hostile detachment near the summit and captured the mountain completely, taking 500 prisoners.

Italian activity was renewed again on the Isonzo front. After intense artillery preparation a Naples brigade, supported by dismounted cavalry detachments, in a surprise attack, penetrated Austrian lines east of Monfalcone. The trenches remained in Italian possession after a severe struggle, during which 10 officers, 488 men, and 7 machine guns were captured.

Italian squadrons of aeroplanes bombarded the railway station at Mattarello, in the Lagarina Valley, and encampments at the



junction of the Nos and Campomulo Valleys on the Asiago Plateau, while Austrian aeroplanes dropped bombs on Padova, Giorgio di Nogaro, and Porto Rosega.

The Italian advance was steadily maintained from now on, not without, however, finding everywhere the stiffest kind of resistance, which at times made it even possible for the Austro-Hungarians to gain slight local successes. These, however, were not extensive or frequent enough to change the general picture of military operations on the Austro-Italian front. The Austrians, though still on Italian territory in a number of localities, were on the defensive with the Italians, though making only very slow and painful progress, unquestionably on the offensive.

On June 16, 1916, the Italians advanced northeast of Asiago, between the Frenzela Valley and Marcesina. Notwithstanding the difficult and intricate nature of the terrain and the stubborn resistance of the Austrians, intrenched and supported by numerous batteries, the Italian troops made progress at the head of the Frenzela Valley, on the heights of Monte Fior and Monte Castel Gomberto and west of Marcesina. The best results were attained on the right wing, where Alpine troops carried the positions of Malga Fossetta and Monte Magari, inflicting heavy losses on the Austrians and taking 203 prisoners, a battery of 6 guns, 4 machine guns, and much material.

During the next few days the most fierce fighting occurred on the plateau of Sette Comuni. All Austrian attempts to resume the offensive and continue their advance failed. The Italian advance was scarcely more successful; fighting had to be done in the most difficult territory; strong Austrian resistance developed everywhere. Thunderstorms frequently added to the difficulties already existent. Yet slowly the Italian forces pushed back the invader.

On June 18, 1916, Alpine troops carried with the bayonet Cima di Sidoro, north of the Frenzela Valley. Fighting developed in the Boite sector, where the Italians had made some slight gains during the previous days, which the Austrians tried to dispute. Heavy Italian artillery bombarded the railway station at Toblach and the Landro road in the Rienz Valley. Artillery

and aeroplane activity was extremely lively during this period. Not a day passed without artillery duels at many scattered points along the entire front from the Swiss border down to the Adriatic. Aeroplane squadrons of considerable force paid continuously visits to the opposing lines, dropping bombs on lines of communication and railway stations.

Alpine troops captured a strong position for the Italians on June 20, 1916, at the head of the Posina Valley, southwest of Monte Purche. On the 22d the Italians pushed their advance beyond Romini in the Arsa Valley, east of the Mezzana Peak, and on the Lora Spur, west of Monte Pasubio.

On the same day the Austrians counterattacked with extreme violence at Malga Fossetta and Castel Gomberto, but were repulsed with heavy losses. On the 21st a further Austrian attack at Cucco di Mandrielle resulted in a rout. On the 22d the Italians, while holding all the Austrian first-line approaches under heavy fire to prevent the bringing up of reserves, attacked on the entire front, but still encountered a strong resistance. During the night of the 24th the remaining peak of Malga Fossetta, held by the Austrians, Fontana Mosciar, and the extremely important Mandrielle were taken by storm, while the Alpini on the right made themselves masters of the Cima Zucadini by the 22d.

Henceforth retreat was inevitable, and during the night of the 25th the Italians on Monte Fior, seeing that the Austrian resistance had greatly diminished, pushed their offensive vigorously. Shortly after the advance was begun along the whole right. Monte Cengio, which had received an infernal bombardment for three days and nights, fell at last, and the advance proceeded apace.

On June 26, 1916, Italian troops in the Arsa Valley carried strong trenches at Mattassone and Naghebene, completing the occupation of Monte Lemerle. Along the Posina front, after driving out the last Austrian detachments from the southern slopes of the mountain, the Italians crossed the torrent and occupied Posina and Arsiero, advancing toward the northern slopes of the valley.

On the Sette Comuni Plateau Italian infantry, preceded by cavalry patrols, reached a line running through Punta Corbin, Fresche, Concafondi, Cesuna, southwest of Asiago, and passing northeast of the Nosi Valley, and occupied Monte Fiara, Monte Lavarle, Spitzkaserle and Cimasaelte.

On the right wing Alpine troops, after a fierce combat, carried Grolla Caldiera Peak and Campanella Peak.

The inside workings of the Italian armies engaged in this offensive movement are interestingly pictured in the following account from the pen of the special correspondent of the London "Times," who, of course, had special opportunities for observation:

"Thanks to the courtesy of the Italian Government and higher command, I have been allowed to go everywhere, to see a great deal on the chief sectors of a 400-mile Alpine border, and to study the administrative services on the lines of communication.

"I have visited the wild hills of the upper Isonzo, have inspected the strange Carso region on the left bank of the river, and have continued my investigations on the Isonzo front as far as Aquileia and the sea. I have threaded beautiful and rugged Carnia nearly as far west as Monte Croce, have ascended the valley of the But to Mount Timau, where the Austrians, as elsewhere, are in close touch, and, passing on to wonderful Cadore, have visited the haunts of the Alpini above the sources of the Tagliamento and Piave.

"Coming then to the Trentino sector, I have traversed the Sugana Valley as far as was practicable, accompanied the army in its reconquest of Asiago Plateau, and concluded an instructive tour by ascending the mountains which dominate Val Lagarina to the point of contact between the contending armies.

"The rest of the front, from the Lago di Garda to the Stelvio and the frontier of Switzerland, is not at present the scene of important operations, so I contented myself by ascertaining at second hand how matters stand between the Valtellina and the Chiese.

"I have had the honor of a private audience with his Majesty the King of Italy, and have seen and talked to nearly all the lead-

ing soldiers. Nothing could exceed the kindness with which I have been received, and my grateful thanks are due especially to Colonels Count Barbarich and Claricetti, who were placed at my disposal by General Cadorna and accompanied me during my tour.

"It is necessary for those who wish to have a clear understanding of Italy's share in the war to look back and realize the situation of our Italian friends when, at the most critical moment for the cause, they threw the weight of their sword into the scales.

"Italy, like England, had lost the habit of considering policy in military terms. Home politics ruled all decisions. The army had been much neglected, and the campaign in Libya had left the war material at a very low ebb. United Italy had not yet fought a great modern campaign, and neither the army nor the navy possessed in the same measure as other powers those great traditions which are the outcome of many recent hard-fought wars. Italy was without our coal and our great metallurgic industries. She did not possess the accumulation of resources which we were able to turn to warlike uses; nor could she find in her over-sea possessions, as we did, the strength and vitality of self-governing younger people of her own race. The old Sardinian army had given in the past fine proofs of valor, but it was not known how the southern Italians would fight, and it was at first uncertain whether the whole country would throw itself heart and soul into the war.

"These impediments to rapid decisions and the extreme difficulty of breaking with an old alliance explain the apparent hesitation of Italy to enter the war.

"On the other hand, there were compensations. The heart of Italy was always with the Allies, and the hatred of Austria was very deep. There was every hope that the long-prevailing system of amalgamating the various races of Italy in the common army would at last bear fruit, and that this amalgamation, combined with the moral and material progress of Italy in recent years, and the pride of the country in its past history, would enable Italy to play an honorable and notable part in the war





GORIZIA

by land and sea, and to wrest from her hereditary enemy those portions of unredeemed Italy which still remained in Austrian hands.

"These hopes have either been fulfilled or are in course of fulfillment. United Italy is unitedly in the war, and, except among a few political busybodies, who intrigue after the manner of their kind, there are not two opinions about the war. There are many cases of mothers compelling their sons to volunteer and other cases of fathers insisting upon being taken because their sons are at the front. The prefect of Friuli told me that nearly all the 24,000 men in his province who were absent abroad when the war broke out returned home to fight before they were recalled. The south and the island areas warm for war as the north, and the regiments of Naples and of Sicily have done very well indeed in the field. Some people think that Piedmont is not quite so enthusiastic as other parts of Italy, because she flags her streets rather less, but I do not think that there is any real difference of feeling. In all the capitals of the Allies the political climate has been a trifle unhealthy, and of Rome it has been said that the old families of the Blacks have not taken a leading part in the campaign. My inquiries make me doubt the accuracy of this statement, and I think on the whole it will be found that, despite the old and persistent divergence of opinion on certain topics, all ranks and all classes are heartily for the war, and that an enemy who counts on assistance from within Italy will be grievously disappointed.

"Italy is fortunate in having at her head, at this critical hour of her destinies, a king who is a soldier born and bred.

"It is a common saying here, that the King of Italy is homesick when he is absent from the army, and it is certain that his majesty spends every hour that he can spare from state affairs with his troops. He wears on his breast the medal ribbon, only given to those who have been at the front for a year, and, though he deprecates any allusion to the fact, it is true that he is constantly in the firing line, has had many narrow escapes, and is personally known to the whole army, who love to see him in their midst.

"I have not found any officer of his army who has a better, a more intimate, or a more accurate knowledge of his troops than the king. His attention to the wants of the army is absolutely untiring, and I fancy that his cool judgment and large experience must often be of great service to his ministers and his generals.

"I do not know whether the field headquarters of the King of Italy or of King Albert of Belgium is the most unpretentious, but certainly both monarchs live in circumstances of extreme simplicity. My recollection is that when I last had the honor of visiting King Albert's headquarters, the bell in what I must call the parlor did not ring, and the queen of the Belgians had to get up and fetch the tea herself.

"When I had the honor of being received by the King of Italy I found his majesty in a little villa which only held four people, and the king was working in a room of which the only furniture which I can recall consisted of a camp bed close to the ground and of exiguous breadth, a small table, and two chairs of uncompromising hardness. The only ornament in the room was the base of the last Austrian shell which had burst just above the king's head and has been mounted as a souvenir by the queen.

"When a prince of the House of Savoy lives in the traditions of his family, and shares all the hardships of his troops, it needs must that his people follow him. And so they do.

"The hardy Alpini from the frontiers, the stout soldiers of Piedmont, the well-to-do peasantry of Venetia, the Sardinians, who are ever to the front when there is fighting to be enjoyed, the Tuscans, Calabrians, and those Sicilians once so famous amongst the legionaries, are all here or at the depots training for war. Mobilization must have affected two and a half million Italians at least. There have been fairly heavy losses, and fighting of one kind or another is going on in every sector that I have visited, and every day, despite the great hardships of fighting on the Alpine frontier, the moral of the army remains good, the men are in splendid health, and Italy as a whole remains gay and confident, less affected on the whole by the war than any other member of the grand alliance.

"There are certainly more able-bodied men of military age out of uniform in Italy than there are in France, or than there are now with us. Except volunteers, no men under twenty are at the front. There are large reserves still available upon which to draw. The army has been more than doubled since the war began.

"The Italian regular officers, and the officers of reserve, are quite excellent. The spirit of good comradeship which prevails in the army is most admirable, and the corps of officers reminds me of a large family which is proverbially a happy one. Those foreign observers who have seen much of the Italian officers under fire tell me that they have always led their men with superb valor and determination, while, though Italy has not such a professional body of N. C. O.'s as Germany, I believe that most of these men are capable of leading when their officers fall.

"But there are not enough of good professional officers and N. C. O.'s to admit for the moment of a considerable further expansion of the army. Existing formations can be, and are being, well maintained, and this is what matters most for the moment.

"The peasant in certain parts of Italy rarely eats meat. In the army he gets 300 to 350 grams a day, according to the season, not to speak of a kilogram of good bread and plenty of vegetables, besides wine and tobacco. He is having the time of his life, and if, as cynics say, peace will break up many happy homes in England, peace in Italy will certainly make some peasants less joyful than before."



## CHAPTER XXVIII

CONTINUATION OF THE ITALIAN  
COUNTEROFFENSIVE

**B**ETWEEN the Adige and the Brenta the retreating Austro-Hungarian forces had now reached strongly fortified and commanding positions which considerably increased their power of resistance. The Italians, however, continued, even if at reduced speed, to make progress. On June 27, 1916, they shelled Austrian positions on Monte Trappola and Monte Testo and took trenches near Malga Zugna. Between the Posina and the Astico they took Austrian positions on Monte Gamonda, north of Fusine, and Monte Cavigio. Cavalry detachments reached Pedescala (in the Astico Valley, about three miles north of Arsiero).

On the Asiago Plateau other Italian forces occupied the southern side of the Assa Valley and reached the slopes of Monte Rasta, Monte Interrotto and Monte Mosciagh, which were held strongly by the Austrian rear guards. Further north, after carrying Monte Colombara, Italian troops began to approach Calamara Valley.

On June 28, 1916, the Vallarsa Alpine troops stormed the fort of Mattassone, and detachments of infantry carried the ridge of Monte Trappola. On the Pasubio sector Italian troops took some trenches near Malga Comagnon. Along the Posina line their advance was delayed by the fire of heavy batteries from the Borcola.

In the Astico Valley they occupied Pedescala. On the Sette Comuni Plateau the Austrians strengthened the northern side of the Assa Valley Heights on the left bank of the Galmarara to the Agnella Pass. The Italians established themselves on the southern side of the Assa Valley and gained possession of trenches near Zebio and Zingarella.

The following day, June 29, 1916, the Italian line in the region between the Val Lagarina and the Val Sugana was pushed for-

ward still further until it reached the main Austrian line of resistance. The Italians occupied the Valmorbia line, in the Vallarsa, the southern slopes of Monte Spil, and began an offensive to the northwest of Pasubio, in the Cosmagnon region.

Farther east on the line of the Posina Valley, the Italians took Monte Maggio, the town of Griso, northwest of Monte Maggio; positions in the Zara Valley and Monte Scatolari and Sogliblanchi. Monte Civaron and the Zellonkofel, in the Sugana Valley, fell into the hands of the Italians.

The Italians continued their advance along the Posina front on June 30, 1916, despite the violent fire of numerous Austro-Hungarian batteries dominating Borcola Pass, and also Monte Maggio and Monte Toraro. Italian infantry occupied Zarolli in the Vallarsa, north of Mattassone. On the left wing, overcoming stubborn resistance, Italian troops scaled the crest of Monte Cosmagnon, whose northerly ridges they shelled to drive out the enemy hidden among the rocks. On the Sette Comuni Plateau they kept in close contact with Austrian positions. Conflicts in the densely wooded and rocky ground were carried on chiefly by hand grenades.

Between the Adige and the Brenta the Italians continued their offensive vigorously on July 1, 1916. In the Vallarsa infantry began an attack on the lines strongly held by the Austrians between Zugna Torta and Foppiano.

Italian artillery shelled Fort Pozzacchio. On Monte Pasubio the Austrians were offering stubborn resistance from their fortified positions between Monte Spil and Monte Cosmagnon.

Along the Posina-Astico line Italian forces completed the conquest of Monte Maggio and occupied the southern side of Monte Seluggio. On the Asiago Plateau there were skirmishes on the northern side of the Assa Valley.

On July 2, 1916, in the region of the Adige Valley, the Austrians directed a heavy bombardment against the Italian positions from Serravalle, north of Coni Zugna to Monte Pasubio. Some shells fell on Ala. Italian artillery replied effectively. The infantry fighting on the northern slopes of Pasubio was continued with great violence. In the Posina Valley Italian troops

occupied the spur to the northwest of Monte Pruche, Molino, in the Zara Valley (northwest of Laghi), and Scatolari, in the Rio Freddo Valley. The operations against Corno del Coston, Monte Seluggio, and Monte Cimono (northwest and north of Arsiero), the main points of Austrian resistance, were continued.

On the Asiago Plateau Italian detachments were pushed forward beyond the northern edge of Assa Valley. On the remainder of this sector there was a lull in the fighting, preparatory to further attacks on the difficult ground. In the Brenta Valley small encounters took place on the slopes of Monte Civaron north of Caldiera.

Monte Calgari, in the Posina Valley, was occupied by the Italians on July 3, 1916, while other detachments completed the occupation of the northern edge of the Assa Valley on the Asiago Plateau.

Between the Adige and the Brenta the Austrians on July 4, 1916, contested with great determination the Italian advance and attempted to counterattack at various points.

After several attempts, Alpine troops reached the summit of Monte Corno, northwest of the Pasubio.

In the upper Astico Basin they captured the crest of Monte Seluggio and advanced toward Rio Freddo.

Between the Lagarina and Sugana Valleys the Italian offensive was continued on July 5, 1916. In the Adige Valley and in the upper Astico Basin pressure compelled the Austrians to withdraw, uncovering new batteries on commanding positions previously prepared by them.

On the Asiago Plateau Italian artillery bombarded the Austrian lines actively. In the Campelle Valley the Austrians evacuated the positions they still held on the Prima Lunetta, abandoning arms, ammunitions and supplies.

The following day brought some new successes to the Italians on the Sette Comuni Plateau. With the support of their artillery they renewed their attack on the strongly fortified line of the Austrians from Monte Interrotto to Monte Campigoletto and captured two important points of the Austrian defenses, near Casera, Zebio and Malga Pozza, taking 359 prisoners, in-

cluding 5 officers and 3 machine guns. Between the Adige and the Astico, north of the Posino and along the Rio Freddo and Astico Valleys there was intense artillery activity, especially in the region of Monte Maggio and Monte Camone. The same condition continued throughout July 7, 1916.

On July 8, 1916, Italian infantry advanced on the upper Astico in the Molino Basin and toward Forni. Dense mist prevented all activity of artillery on the Sette Comuni Plateau. In the northern sector the Italians stormed some trenches north of Monte Chiesa, and occupied Agnella Pass.

A great deal of the fighting, both during the Austro-Hungarian offensive in the Trentino and the Italian counteroffensive, took place in territory abounding with lofty mountain peaks. Though it was now midsummer, these were, of course, covered with eternal snow and ice. Austrians and Italians alike faced difficulties and hardships, the solution and endurance of which would have seemed utterly impossible a few years ago until the Great War swept away many long-established military and engineering maxims. An intimate picture of this new mode of warfare was given by a special correspondent of the London "Daily Mail" who, in part, says:

"The villages in the lower ground behind the front have been aroused from their accustomed appearance of sleepy comfort. In their streets are swarms of soldiers on their way to the front or back from it for a holiday. Thousands are camping out in the neighborhood of the villages or billeted on the inhabitants. Constant streams of motor vehicles rumble through the villages on their way up the steep road, bearing ammunition, food and supplies of all sorts, to the batteries, trenches and dugouts on the peaks.

The road over which these vehicles travel was before the war a mere hill path—now the military engineers have transformed it into a modern road, graded, metaled and carried by cunningly devised spirals and turns three-quarters of the way up the mountains.

"It is a notable piece of military engineering, but it is not merely that. It will serve as an artery of commerce when it



is no longer needed for the passage of guns and army service wagons. There is nothing temporary or makeshift about it. Rocks have been blasted to leave a passage for it and solid bridges of stone and steel thrown across rivers.

"Because the Austrians started with the weather gauge in their favor, being on the upper side of the great ridges, it was necessary for the Italians to get their guns as high as they could. The means by which they accomplished this task was described to me. They would seem incredible if one had not ocular demonstration of the actual presence of the cannon among these inaccessible crags.

"There are some of them on the ice ledges of the Ortler nearly 10,000 feet above sea level, in places which it is by way of an achievement for the amateur climber to reach with guides and ropes and porters, and nothing to take care of but his own skin. But here the Alpini and Frontier Guides had to bring up the heavy pieces, hauling them over the snow slopes and swinging them in midair across chasms and up knife-edged precipices, by ropes passed over timbers wedged somehow into the rocks. I was shown a photograph of a party of these pioneers working in these snowy solitudes last winter. They might have been a group of Scott's or Shackleton's men toiling in the Antarctic wilderness.

"By means of a suspension railway made of wire rope with sliding baskets stretched across chasms of great depth, oil, meat, bread and wine are sent up, for the soldier must not only be fed, but must be fed with particular food to keep the blood circulating in his body in the cold air and chilling breezes of the snow-clad peaks. Kerosene stoves in great numbers have been sent aloft to make the life of the mountaineer soldiers more comfortable."

On July 9, 1916, there was bitter fighting between the Brenta and the Adige. Strong Alpine forces repeatedly attacked the Austrian lines southeast of Cima Dieci, but were repulsed with heavy losses. Shells set fire to Pedescala and other places in the upper Astico Valley. An attempt by the Austrians to make attacks on Monte Seluggio was checked promptly.

In the Adige Valley another intense artillery duel was staged on July 10, 1916. On the Pasubio front the Italians captured positions north of Monte Corno, but the Austrians succeeded in obtaining partial repossession of them by a violent counterattack. On the Asiago Plateau Alpine detachments successfully renewed the attack on the Austrian positions in the Monte Chiesa region.

The next day, July 11, 1916, the Italians again made some progress in the Adige Valley, north of Serravalle and in the region of Malga Zugna, and reoccupied partially some of the positions lost on the northern slopes of Monte Pasubio on the previous day. Heavy artillery duels took place in the Asiago Basin and on the Sette Comuni Plateau.

The Austrians promptly responded on July 12, 1916, by attacking in the Adige Valley, after artillery preparation on an immense scale, the new Italian positions north of Malga Zugna. They were driven back in disorder, with heavy loss, by the prompt and effective concentration of the Italian gunfire.

Fighting in the Adige Valley and on the Sette Comuni Plateau continued without cessation during the next few days without yielding any very definite results. In that period there also developed extremely severe fighting at the head of the Posina Valley. During the night of July 13, 1916, the Italians succeeded in carrying very strong Austrian positions south of Corno del Coston and east of the Borcola Pass, notwithstanding the strong resistance of the Austrians and the difficulty presented by the roughness of the ground. During the night the Austrians launched several violent but unsuccessful counterattacks in which they lost heavily.

In spite of violent thunderstorms, seriously interfering with artillery activity, fighting continued in this sector on July 14 and 15, 1916. Italian troops made some progress on the southern slopes of Sogli Bianchi, south of Borcola and the Corno di Coston and in the Boin Valley, where they occupied Vanzi on the northern slopes of Monte Hellugio.

Austrian reenforcements arrived at this time, and as a result a series of heavy attacks was delivered in the upper Posina

area in an attempt to stop the Italian advance between Monte Santo and Monte Toraro. Italian counterattacks, however, were launched promptly and enabled the Italian forces to maintain and extend their lines. Throughout the balance of July, 1916, the Italian troops succeeded in continuing their advance, although the Austro-Hungarian resistance showed no noticeable abatement and frequently was strong enough to permit not only very effective defensive work, but rather considerable counterattacks. However, all in all, the Italians had decidedly the better of it. Step by step they pushed their way back into the territory from which the Austro-Hungarian offensive of a few weeks ago had driven them.

On July 18, 1916, the Italians gained some new positions on the rocky slopes of the Corno del Coston in the upper Posina Valley. Four days later, July 22, 1916, they captured some trenches on Monte Zebio on the Sette Comuni Plateau. The next day, July 23, 1916, between Cismon and Aviso they completed the occupation of the upper Trevignolo and St. Pellegriano Valleys, taking the summit of Monte Stradone and new positions on the slopes of Cima di Bocche.

On the Posina-Astico line at daybreak of July 24, 1916, after a fierce attack by night, they captured Monte Cimone, for the possession of which violent fighting had been in progress for days.

Further north, Alpine troops renewed their efforts against the steep rock barrier rising to more than 2,000 yards between the peaks of Monte Chiesa and Monte Campigoletto. Under heavy fire from the Austrian machine guns they crossed three lines of wire and succeeded in establishing themselves just below the crest.

Again and again the Austrians launched attacks against the Italian positions on these various mountains without, however, accomplishing more than retarding the further advance of General Cadorna's forces.

The second anniversary of the outbreak of the Great War, August 1, 1916, found the Italians on the Trentino front still strongly on the offensive and well on their way toward regaining

all of the ground which they had lost in June and July, 1916, before the Austro-Hungarian offensive had been brought to a standstill, while the Austrians were yielding only under the force of the greatest pressure which their opponents could bring to bear on them.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### MINOR OPERATIONS ON THE AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRONT IN TRENTINO OFFENSIVE

JUST as soon as the Austro-Hungarian forces began to concentrate their activities in the latter part of May, 1916, on their drive in the Trentino, military operations in the other sectors of the Austro-Italian front lost in importance and strength. During the greatest part of both the Austro-Hungarian drive and the Italian counteroffensive in the Trentino—May to July, 1916—operations along the rest of the Austro-Italian front—on the northwestern frontier of Tyrol, along the Boite River in the northeastern Dolomites, in the Carnic and Julian Alps, and on the Isonzo front—were practically restricted to artillery duels. Only occasional, and then but very local infantry engagements took place, none of which had any particular influence on general conditions in these various sectors. However, as the Italian counteroffensive in the Trentino progressed, there developed from time to time minor operations along the other parts of the front. Quite a number of these were initiated by the Austro-Hungarians, undoubtedly in the hopes that they might thereby reduce the Italian pressure on their newly gained successes in the Trentino. Others found their origin on the Italian side, which at all times attempted to avail itself of every opportunity to extend and strengthen its positions anywhere along the front. And as the Austrian resistance against the Italian counteroffensive stiffened and showed no signs of abatement, General Cadorna, in undertaking operations in other sectors of the front than the Trentino, was undoubtedly influenced by motives similar to those guiding his opponents. He, too, hoped to impress his adversary



sufficiently by minor operations in sectors unconnected with the Trentino, to reduce their strength there.

Considerable light is thrown upon the organization of the Italian army, which made it possible to carry on successfully these operations, in the following article from the pen of the special correspondent of the London "Times":

"I have been allowed to visit the offices of the general staff at army headquarters and those of the administrative services at another point within the war zone. This is not a favorable moment for describing how the army machinery works; but there is no harm done in saying that all these services appear to run smoothly, have good men at their head, and produce good results.

"I was particularly struck by the maps turned out. They do great credit to the Military Geographical Institute at Florence, and to the officers at headquarters who revise the maps as new information pours in. All the frontiers have been well surveyed and mapped on scales of 1:25,000, 1:50,000, 1:100,000, and 1:200,000. These maps are very clear and good. I like best the 1:100,000, which is issued to all officers, and on which operation orders are based. The photographs are also very fine, and the panoramas excellent, while the airmen's photographs, and the plans compiled from them, are quite in the front rank.

"The service of information at headquarters also appears to me to be good. There are more constant changes in all the Italian staffs than we should consider desirable, and officers pass very rapidly from one employment to another, but in spite of this practice the information is well kept up, and the knowledge of the enemy's dispositions is up to standard, considering the extraordinary difficulty of following the really quite chaotic organization of the Austro-Hungarian forces.

"I am not sure that I like very much the liaison system in Italy. The comparatively young officers intrusted with it report direct to army headquarters, and on their reports the communiqués are usually based. These officers remind us of the *missi dominici* of the great Moltke, but on the whole I confess that the system does not appeal to me very much.

"All the rearward services of the army are united under the control of the intendant general, who is a big personage in Italy. He deals with movements, quarterings, railways, supply, munitions in transit, and, in fact, everything except drafts and aviation, both of which services come under the general staff. There is a representative of the intendant general in each army and army corps. An order of movement is repeated to the intendant general by telephone and he arranges for transport, food, and munitions.

"The means of transport include the railways, motor lorries, carts, pack mules, and porters. The railways have done well. They had 5,000 locomotives and 160,000 carriages available when war broke out, and on the two lines running through Venetia, they managed during the period of concentration to clear 120 trains a day. Between last May 17 and June 22, 1916, for the purposes of General Cadorna's operations in the Trentino, the railways carried 18,000 officers, 522,000 men, about 70,000 animals, and 16,000 vehicles, with nearly 900 guns. These figures have been given by the Italian press, so there is no harm done by alluding to them. The railway material is much better than I expected it to be, but coal is very dear.

"The motor lorries work well. There are three types in use—the heavy commercial cars, the middleweight lorries, which carry over a couple of tons, and the lightweights, taking about one and a half tons. These lorries form an army service. Each army park has a group of lorries for each army corps forming part of the army, and each group has two sections for each division. The motor cars of the commanders and staffs are good. I traveled several thousand miles in them, and having covered 300 miles one day and 350 another, am prepared to give a good mark to Italian motor-car manufacturers, and also to Italian roads and Italian chauffeurs.

"I may also point out that the army has hitherto administered the Austrian districts which have been occupied on various parts of the front, and has had to deal with agriculture, roads, births, deaths, marriages, police, and a great many other civil matters. As I had once seen a French corps of cavalry farming nearly

5,000 acres of land I was prepared to see the Italian army capable of following suit; but I fancy that if Signor Bissolati is to take over all these civil duties General Porro will be far from displeased.

"There is the little matter of the 4,000 ladies who remain at Cortina d'Ampezzo while their men are away fighting in the Austrian ranks, and there are such questions as those of the Aquileia treasures, which have fortunately been preserved intact. I must confess that it is a novelty and a pleasure to enter an enemy's territory and sit down in a room marked *Militär Wachtzimmer*, with all the enemy's emblems on the walls, but on the whole I liked best the advice *evitare di fumare esplosioni* painted by some Italian wag on an Austrian guardhouse, and possibly intended as a hint to Austro-German diplomacy in the future.

"The Italians regard Austria as we regard Germany, and Germany as we regard Austria. Austria is the enemy, but at the same time, while every crime is attributed to Austria on slight suspicion, I find no unworthy depreciation of Austrian soldiers. I am told that while Austrian discipline is very severe, and the officer's revolver is ever quick to maintain it, the Austrian private soldier has a sense of deep loyalty toward his emperor, and that this is a personal devotion which will not easily be transferred to a successor. In meeting the Kaiserjäger so often the Italians perhaps see Austria's best, but the fact remains that the Italian has a good word for the Austrian as a soldier, and that I did not see many signs of such willful and shameless vandalism by the Austrians as has disgraced the name of Germany in Belgium and in France. Even towns which are or have been between the contending armies have not, I think, been willfully destroyed, but they have naturally suffered when one army or the other has used the town as a pivot of defense.

"The officers who have to keep the tally of the Austrian forces and to locate all the divisions have my deepest sympathy. Long ago the Austrian army corps ceased to contain the old divisions of peace times, but one now finds army corps with as many as four divisions, while the division may be composed of

anything from two to eight battalions. A certain number of the divisions reckoned to be against the Italians on the whole front are composed of dubious elements, and there are some sixty Austrian battalions of rifle clubmen.

"The Austrians shift regiments about in such apparently haphazard fashion that it is hard to keep track of them. They may take half a dozen battalions from different regiments and call it a mountain group. In a week or two they will break it up and distribute the battalions elsewhere. They usually follow up their infantry with so-called march battalions, but whether these battalions are 100 or 1,000 strong seems quite uncertain. Some surprise occurs elsewhere, and away go some of the march battalions. They may lose prisoners, say, on the Russian front, and the Russians naturally believe that the regiment and the division to which the regiment belongs are all on the Russian front, whereas only one weak battalion of drafts may be there and all the rest may still be against the Italians. The Austrians also take a number of regiments from a division and send them elsewhere, leaving a mere skeleton of the divisional command behind.

"For these reasons one must regard with a good deal of scepticism any estimate which professes to give an accurate distribution list of the Austrian army. Also it is difficult to believe that any real *esprit de corps* can remain when such practices are common, and we are reduced to the belief that the only real soldier of the army is the personal devotion to the emperor of which I have already written.

"I could not find time to study the Italian air service, but foreign officers with the army speak well of it. The Austrian airmen deserve praise. They watched us daily and bombed with pleasing regularity.

"My view of the war on the Italian front is that Italy is in it with her whole heart, and has both the will and the means to exercise increasing pressure on Austria, whom she is subjecting to a serious strain along 400 miles of difficult country. I think that few people in England appreciate the special and serious difficulties which confront both combatants along the Alpine



borderland, and especially Italy, because she has to attack. The Italian army is strong in numbers, ably commanded, well provided, and animated by an excellent spirit. As this army becomes more inured to war, and traditions of victory on hard-fought fields become established, the military value of the army is enhanced.

"As I think over the Italian exploits during the war, I remember that the men of Alps, of Piedmont and Lombardy, of Venetia, and Tuscany, of Rome, Naples, Sardinia, and Sicily have one and all contributed something to the record, and have had the honor of distinguished mention in General Cadorna's bulletins, which are austere in character and make no concessions to personal or collective ambitions. I find much to admire in the cool and confident bearing of the people, in the endurance of great fatigues by the troops, and in the silent patience of the wounded on the battle field. I fancy that the army is better in the attack than in the defense, and I should trust most with an Italian army to an attack pressed through to the end without halting."

The first indications of renewed activity, outside of artillery duels, anywhere except in the Trentino, appeared during the last days of June. On June 28, 1916, the Italians suddenly, after a comparative quiet of several months, began what appeared to be a strong offensive movement on the Isonzo front. They violently bombarded portions of the front on the Doberdo Plateau (south of Goritz). In the evening heavy batteries were brought to bear against Monte San Michele and the region of San Martino. After the fire had been increased to great intensity over the whole plateau, Italian infantry advanced to attack. At Monte San Michele, near San Martino and east of Vermigliano, violent fighting developed. At the Goritz bridgehead the Italians attacked the southern portion of the Podgora position (on the right bank of the Isonzo), and penetrated the first line trenches of the Austrians, but were driven out.

The Italian offensive was continued the next day, June 29, 1916, and resulted in the capture of Hills 70 and 104 in the Monfalcone district. The Austrians undertook a counteroffen-

sive at Monte San Michele and Monte San Marino, on the Doberdo Plateau, attacking the Italian lines under cover of gas. Fighting continued in the Monfalcone sector of the Isonzo front for about a week, during which time the Austrians vainly endeavored to regain the positions which they had lost in the first onrush of the Italian offensive. After that it again deteriorated into artillery activity which was fairly constantly maintained throughout the balance of July, 1916, without producing any noteworthy changes in the general situation.

Coincident with this short Italian offensive in the Monfalcone sector of the Isonzo front, there also developed considerable fighting to the east on the Carso Plateau, north of Trieste, which, however, was equally barren of definite results.

Minor engagements between comparatively small infantry detachments occurred in the adjoining sector—that of the Julian Alps—on July 1, 1916, especially in the valleys of the Fella, Gail and Seebach. These were occasionally repeated, especially so on July 19, 1916, but throughout most of the time only artillery duels took place.

In the Carnic Alps hardly anything of importance occurred throughout the late spring and the entire summer of 1916, excepting fairly continuous artillery bombardments, varying in strength and extent.

Considerable activity, however, was the rule rather than the exception in the sector between the Carnic Alps and the Dolomites. There, one point especially, saw considerable fighting. Monte Tofana, just beyond the frontier on the Austrian side, had been held by the Italians for a considerable period, and with it a small section of the surrounding country, less than five miles in depth. The Italians at various times attempted, with more or less success, to extend and strengthen their holdings, while the Austrians, with equal determination, tried to wrest from them what they had already gained, and to arrest their further progress.

In this region Alpine detachments of the Italian army on the night of July 8, 1916, gained possession of a great part of the valley between Tofana Peaks Nos. 7 and 2, and of a strong

position on Tofana Prima commanding the valley. The Austrian garrison was surrounded and compelled to surrender. The Italians took 190 prisoners, including eight officers, and also three machine guns, a large number of rifles and ammunition.

A few days later, on July 11, 1916, the Italians exploded a mine, destroying the Austro-Hungarian defenses east of Col dei Bois peak. This position commanded the road of the Dolomites and the explosion blew it up entirely, and gave possession of it to the Italians. The entire Austrian force which occupied the summit was buried in the wreckage. On the following night the Austrians attempted to regain this position which the Italians had fortified strongly in the meantime, but the attack broke down completely.

Three days later, July 14, 1916, Italian Alpine detachments surprised and drove the Austrians from their trenches near Castelletto and at the entrance of the Travenanzes Valley. They took some prisoners, including two officers, as well as two guns, two machine guns, one trench mortar and a large quantity of arms and ammunition. An Austrian counterattack against this position was launched on July 15, 1916, but was repulsed.

Finally on July 30, 1916, the Italians registered one more success in this region. Some of their Alpine troops carried Porcella Wood and began an advance in the Travenanzes Valley.

Throughout this period considerable artillery activity was maintained on both sides. As a result Cortina d'Ampezzo, on the Italian side, suffered a great deal from Austrian shells, while Toblach, on the Austrian, was the equally unfortunate recipient of Italian gunfire.

On the western frontier, between Italy and Austria, along Val Camonica, only artillery bombardments were the order of the day. These were particularly severe at various times in the region of the Tonale Pass, but without important results.

Aeroplanes, of course, were employed extensively, both by the Austro-Hungarians and the Italians, although the nature of the

country did not lend itself as much to this form of modern warfare as in the other theaters of war. Some of these enterprises have already been mentioned. The Austrians, in this respect, were at a decided advantage, because their airships had many objects for attacks in the various cities of the North Italian plain. Among these Bergamo, Brescia, and Padua were the most frequent sufferers, while Italian aeroplanes frequently bombarded Austrian lines of communication and depots.



## PART V—RUSSO-TURKISH CAMPAIGN

### CHAPTER XXX

#### RUSSIAN SUCCESSES AFTER ERZERUM

WITH the same surprising vigor with which the Russian armies in the Caucasus had pushed their advance toward Erzerum, they took up the pursuit of the retreating Turkish army, after this important Armenian stronghold had capitulated on February 16, 1916. With Erzerum as a center the Russian advance spread out rapidly in all directions toward the west in the general direction of Erzingan and Sivas; in the south toward Mush, Bitlis and the region around Lake Van, and in the north with the important Black Sea port of Trebizond as the objective. This meant a front of almost 300 miles without a single railroad and only a limited number of roads that really deserved that appellation. Almost all of this country is very mountainous. To push an advance in such country at the most favorable season of the year involves the solution of the most complicated military problems. The country itself offers comparatively few opportunities for keeping even a moderate-sized army sufficiently supplied with food and water for men and beasts. But considering that the Russian advance was undertaken during the winter, when extremely low temperatures prevail, and when vast quantities of snow add to all the other natural difficulties in the way of an advancing army, the Russian successes were little short of marvelous.

As early as February 23, 1916, the right wing of the Russian army had reached and occupied the town of Ispir on the river Chorok, about fifty miles northwest of Erzerum, and halfway

between that city and Rizeh, a town on the south shore of the Black Sea, less than fifty miles east of Trebizond. At the same time Russian destroyers were bombarding the Black Sea coast towns. Under their protective fire fresh troops were landed a few days later at Atina on the Black Sea, about sixty miles east of Trebizond, which promptly occupied that town. From there they rapidly advanced southward toward Rizeh, forcing the Turks to evacuate their positions and capturing some prisoners as well as a few guns, together with rifles and ammunition.

The center, in the meantime, had advanced on the Erzerum-Trebizond road, and by February 25, 1916, occupied the town of Ashkala, about thirty miles from Erzerum. From all sides the Russian armies were closing in on Trebizond, and their rapid success threw the Turkish forces into consternation, for the loss of Trebizond would mean a serious threat to their further safety, having been up to then the principal point through which supplies and ammunition reached them steadily and rapidly by way of the Black Sea. No wonder then that the London "Times" correspondent in Petrograd was able to report on March 5, 1916, that all accounts agreed that the population of the Trebizond region were panic-stricken and fleeing even then in the direction of Kara-Hissar and Sivas, flight along the Black Sea route being out of question on account of the presence of Russian warships.

In the south the left wing of the Russian army was equally successful. On March 1, 1916, it occupied Mamawk, less than ten miles north of Bitlis, a success foreshadowing the fall of that important Armenian city. And, indeed, on the next day, March 2, 1916, Bitlis was occupied by the Russians. This was indeed another severe blow to the Turkish armies. Bitlis, 110 miles south of Erzerum, in Armenian Tamos, is one of the most important trade centers, and commands a number of important roads. It is only about fifty miles north of the upper Tigris, and even though it is more than 350 miles from Bagdad, its occupation by Russian forces seriously menaced the road to Bagdad, Bagdad itself, and even the rear of the Turkish army, fighting against the Anglo-Indian army in Mesopotamia.

Hardly had the Turks recovered from this blow when their left wing in the north suffered another serious reverse through the loss of the Black Sea port of Rizeh. This event took place on March 8, 1916, and the capture was accomplished by the fresh Russian troops that had been landed a few days before at Atina, from which Rizeh is only twenty-two miles distant. Along the Black Sea coast the Russians were now within thirty-eight miles of Trebizond. On and on the Russians pressed, and by March 17, 1916, their advance guard was reported within twenty miles of Trebizond. However, by this time Turkish resistance along the entire Armenian front stiffened perceptibly. This undoubtedly was due to reenforcements which must have reached the Turkish line by that time. For on March 30, 1916, the official Russian statement announced that seventy officers and 400 men who had been captured along the Caucasus littoral front belonged to a Turkish regiment which had previously fought at Gallipoli. At the same time it was also announced that fighting had occurred northwest of Mush. The Turkish forces involved in this fighting must have been recent reenforcements, because Mush is sixty-five miles northwest of Bitlis, the occupation of which took place about four weeks previously, at which time the region between Erzerum and Bitlis undoubtedly had been cleared of Turkish soldiers. Their reappearance, now so close to the road between Bitlis and Erzerum, presented a serious menace both to the center and to the left wing of Grand Duke Nicholas's forces, for if the Turkish troops were in large enough force, the Russians were in danger of having their center and left wing separated. This condition, of course, meant that until this danger was removed, the closest cooperation between the various parts of the Russian army became essential, and therefore resulted in a general slowing down of the Russian advance for the time being.

In the meantime the Russian center continued its advance against Erzingan. This is an Armenian town of considerable military importance, being the headquarters of the Fourth Turkish Army Corps. On March 16, 1916, an engagement took place about sixty miles west of Erzerum, resulting in the occu-

pation by the Russians of the town of Mama Khatun, located on the western Euphrates and on the Erzerum-Erzincan-Sivas road. According to the official Russian statement the Turks lost five cannon, some machine guns and supplies and forty-four officers and 770 men by capture. Here, too, however, the Turks began to offer a more determined resistance, and although the official Russian statement of the next day, March 17, 1916, reported a continuation of the Russian advance towards Erzincan, it also mentioned Turkish attempts at making a stand and spoke even of attempted counterattacks.

This stiffening of Turkish resistance necessitated apparently a change in the Russian plans. No longer do we hear now of quick, straight, advances from point to point. But the various objectives toward which the Russians were directing their attacks—Trebizond, Erzincan, the Tigris—are attacked either successfully or consecutively from all possible directions and points of vantage. Not until now, for instance, do we hear of further advances toward Erzincan from the north. It will be recalled that as long ago as February 23, 1916, the Russians occupied the town of Ispir, some fifty miles northwest of Erzerum on the river Chorok.

The headwaters of this river are located less than twenty-five miles northeast of Erzincan, and up its valley a new Russian offensive against Erzincan was started as soon as the new strength of the Turkish defensive along the direct route from Erzerum made itself felt.

On April 1, 1916, and again on April 12, 1916, the Turks reported that they had repulsed attacks of Russian scouting parties advancing along the upper Chorok, and even claimed an advance for their own troops. But on the next day, April 3, 1916, the Russians apparently were able to turn the tables on their opponents, claiming to have crossed the upper basin of the Chorok and to have seized strongly fortified Turkish positions located at a height of 10,000 feet above sea level, capturing thereby a company of Turks. Again on the following day, April 4, 1916, the Russians succeeded in dislodging Turkish forces from powerful mountain positions.



Concurrent with these engagements, fighting took place both in the south and north. On April 2, 1916, a Turkish camp was stormed by Russian battalions near Mush to the northwest of Bitlis. Still farther south, about twenty-five miles southeast of Bitlis, the small town of Khizan had fallen into the hands of the Russians, who drove its defenders toward the south. The Russian advance to the southwest of Mush and Bitlis continued slowly but definitely throughout the next few days, with the town of Diarbekr on the right bank of the upper Tigris as its objective.

Beginning with the end of March, 1916, the Turks also launched a series of strong counterattacks along the coastal front. The first of these was undertaken during the night of March 26, 1916, but apparently was unsuccessful. It was an answer to a strong attack on the part of the Russians during the preceding day which resulted in the dislodgment of Turkish troops holding strong positions in the region of the Baltatchi Darassi River and in the occupation by the Russians of the town of Of on the Black Sea, thirty miles to the east of Trebizond. This success was due chiefly to the superiority of the Russian naval forces, which made it possible to precede their infantry attack with heavy preparatory artillery fire. By March 27, 1916, the Russians had advanced to the Oghene Dere River, another of the numerous small rivers flowing into the Black Sea between Rizeh and Trebizond. There they had occupied the heights of the left (west) bank. During the night the Turks made a series of strong counterattacks, all of which, however, were repulsed with considerable losses to the attackers. Another Turkish counterattack in the neighborhood of Trebizond was launched on April 4, 1916. Although strongly supported by gunfire from the cruiser *Breslau*, it was repulsed by the combined efforts of the Russian land forces and destroyers lying before Trebizond. During the next few days the Turks offered the most determined resistance to the Russian advance against Trebizond, especially along the river Kara Dere. This resistance was not broken until April 15, 1916, when the Turks were driven out of their fortified positions on the left bank of that

river by the combined action of the Russian land and naval forces. The Russian army was now, after almost a fortnight's desperate fighting, within sixteen miles of its goal, Trebizond. On April 16, 1916, it again advanced, occupying Surmench on the Black Sea, and reaching later that day, after a successful pursuit of the retreating Turkish army, the village of Asseue Kalessi, only twelve miles east of Trebizond.

With this defeat the fall of Trebizond apparently was sealed. Although reports came from various sources that the Turkish General Staff was making the most desperate efforts to save the city by dispatching new reinforcements from central Anatolia, the Russian advance could not be stopped seriously any longer. Every day brought reports of new Russian successes along the entire Armenian front. On April 17, 1916, they occupied Drona, only six and a half miles east of Trebizond. Then finally, on April 18, 1916, came the announcement that Trebizond itself had been taken.

Trebizond is less important as a fortified place than as a port and harbor and as a source of supply for the Turkish army. It is in no sense a fortress like Erzerum, though the defenses of the town, recently constructed, are not to be despised. As a vital artery of communications, however, its value is apparent from the fact, first, that it is the Turks' chief port in this region, and secondly, that railway facilities, which are so inadequate throughout Asia Minor, are nonexistent along the northern coast. Hence the Turks will have to rely for the transport of troops and supplies upon railways which at the nearest point are more than 300 miles from the front at Trebizond.

Trebizond is an ancient seaport of great commercial importance, due chiefly to the fact that it controls the point where the principal trade route from Persia and central Asia to Europe, over Armenia and by way of Bayezid and Erzerum, descends to the sea. It has been the dream of Russia for centuries to put her hands forever upon this important "window on the Black Sea."

Trebizond's population is about 40,000, of whom 22,000 are Moslems and 18,000 Christians. The city first figured in history during the Fourth Crusade, when Alexius Comnenus, with an

army of Iberian mercenaries, entered it and established himself as sovereign. In 1461 Trebizond was taken by Mohammed II, after it had for two centuries been the capital of an empire, having defied all attacks, principally by virtue of its isolated position, between a barrier of rugged mountains of from 7,000 to 8,000 feet and the sea.

As far as capturing important ports of the Turkish left wing was concerned, the victory of Trebizond was an empty one. For the Turks evacuated the town apparently a day or two before the Russians occupied it. The latter, therefore, had only the capture of "some 6-inch guns" to report. This quick evacuation, at any rate, was fortunate for the town and its inhabitants, for it saved them from a bombardment and the town did not suffer at all as a result of the military operations.

The campaign resulting in the fall of Trebizond did really not begin until after the fall of Erzerum on February 16, 1916. Up to that time the Russian Caucasian army had apparently been satisfied to maintain strong defensive positions along the Turkish border. But since the occupation of Erzerum a definite plan of a well-developed offensive was followed looking toward the acquisition of Turkish territory which had long been coveted by Russia.

With the fall of Trebizond Russia became the possessor, at least temporarily, of a strip of territory approximately 125 miles wide along a front of almost 250 miles length, or of an area of 31,250 square miles. In the north this valuable acquisition was bounded by that part of the south shore of the Black Sea that stretches from Batum in Russian Transcaucasia to Trebizond. In the south it practically reached the Turko-Persian frontier, while in the west it almost reached the rough line formed by the upper Euphrates and the upper Tigris. It thus comprised the larger part of Armenia. As soon as the Russians had found out that the Turks had a start of almost two days, they began an energetic pursuit. The very first day of it, April 19, 1916, brought them into contact with Turkish rear guards and resulted in the capture of a considerable number of them. The retreat of the Turks took a southwesterly direction toward

Baiburt along the Trebizond-Erzerum road and toward Erzingan, to which a road branches off the Trebizond-Erzerum road. Baiburt was held by the Turks with a force strong enough to make it impossible for the Russians to cut off the Trebizond garrison. Along the coast the Russians found only comparatively weak resistance, so that they were able to land fresh forces west of Trebizond and occupy the town of Peatana, about ten miles to the west on the Black Sea.

A desperate struggle, however, developed for the possession of the Trebizond-Erzerum road. The Russians had been astride this road for some time as far as Madan Khan and Kop, both about fifty miles northwest of Erzerum and just this side of Baiburt. There the Turks put up a determined resistance and succeeded in holding up the Russian advance. Although they were not equally successful farther north, the Russians managed to advance along this road to the south of Trebizond only as far as Jeyizlik—about sixteen miles south of Trebizond—where they were forced into the mountains toward the Kara Dere River. This left still the larger part of the entire road in possession of the Turks, and especially that part from which another road branched off to Erzingan.

In the Mush and Bitlis region the Russians had made satisfactory progress in the meantime. On April 19, 1916, progress was reported to the south of Bitlis toward Sert, although the Turks fought hard to hold up this advance toward Diarbekr. This advance was the direct result of the defeat which the Russians had inflicted on a Turkish division at Bitlis as early as April 15, 1916. By April 23, 1916, the Turks had again gathered some strength and were able to report that they had repulsed Russian attacks south of Bitlis, west of Mush, east of Baiburt, and south of Trebizond. From then on, however, the Russians again advanced to the south of Bitlis as well as in the direction of Erzingan. By the beginning of May, 1916, the Russian official statements do not speak any longer of the "region south of Bitlis," but mention instead "the front toward Diarbekr." This important town is about 100 miles southwest of Bitlis, and apparently had become, after the fall of Trebizond, together with



Erzingan, one of the immediate objectives of the Russian campaign.

Diarbekr is a town of 35,000 inhabitants, whose importance arises from its being the meeting point of the roads from the Mediterranean via Aleppo and Damascus from the Black Sea via Amasia-Kharput, and Erzerum and from the Persian Gulf via Bagdad. Ras-el-Ain, the present railhead of the Bagdad railway, is seventy miles south.

The stiffening of the Turkish defensive was being maintained as April, 1916, waned and May approached. The Russian campaign in the Caucasus had resolved itself now into three distinctive parts: In the north its chief objective, Trebizond, had been reached and gained. There further progress, of course, would be attempted along the shore of the Black Sea, and in a way it was easier to achieve progress here than at any other part of the Caucasian front. For first of all the nature of the ground along the coast of the Black Sea was much less difficult, and then, too, the Russian naval forces could supply valuable assistance. That progress was not made faster here by the Russians was due entirely to the fact that the advance along the two other sectors was more difficult and the Turkish resistance more desperate. And, of course, if the front of any one sector was pushed considerably ahead of the front of the other two, grave danger immediately arose that the most advanced sector would be cut off from the rest of the Russian armies by flank movements. For in a country such as Turkish Armenia, without railroads and with only a few roads, it was of course impossible to establish a continuous front line, such as was to be formed on the European battle fields both in the east and west. This explains why by May 1, 1916, the Russian front had been pushed less than twenty-five miles west of Trebizond, even though almost two weeks had elapsed since the fall of Trebizond.

In the center sector the immediate objective of the Russians was Erzingan. Beyond that they undoubtedly hoped to advance to Swas, an important Turkish base. Toward this objective two distinct lines of offensive had developed by now—one along the valley of the river Oborok and the other along the Erzerum-

Erzingan road and the valley of the western Euphrates. The latter was somewhat more successful than the former, chiefly because it did not offer so many natural means of defense. But to both of these offensives the Turks now offered a most determined resistance, and the Russians, though making progress continuously, did so only very slowly.

In the southern sector conditions were very similar. Here, too, two separate offensives had developed, although they were more closely correlated than in the center. One was directed in a southwestern direction from Mush, and the other in the same direction from Bitlis. Both had as their objective Diarbekr, an important trading center on the Tigris and a future station on the unfinished part of the Bagdad railroad. Here, too, Russian progress was fairly continuous but very slow.

Some interesting details regarding the tremendous difficulties which nature put in the way of any advancing army, and which were utilized by the Turks to their fullest possibility, may be gleaned from the following extracts from letters written by Russian officers serving at the Caucasian front:

"We have traveled sixty miles in two days, and never have we been out of sight of the place from whence we started. South and north we have scouted until we have come into touch with the cavalry of the — Corps of the vedettes which the Cossacks of the Don furnished for the — Brigade. Sometimes it is wholly impossible to ride. The slopes of these hills are covered with huge boulders, behind any of which half a company of the enemy might be lurking. That has been our experience, and poor K—— was shot dead while leading his squadron across a quite innocent-looking plateau from which we thought the enemy had been driven.

"As it turned out, a long line of boulders, which he thought were too small to hide anything but a sniper, in reality marked a rough trench line which a Kurdish regiment was holding in strength, K—— was shot down, as also was his lieutenant, and half the squadron were left on the ground. Fortunately, at the foot of the road leading down to the plateau, the sergeant who led the men out of action found one of our Caucasian regi-

ments who are used to dealing with the fezzes, and they came up at the double, and after two hours' fighting were reenforced by another two companies and carried the trench.

"Farther back we found the enemy in a stronger plateau. Almost within sight of the enemy we made tea and rested before attempting to push forward to the fight.

"An officer of the staff who does not understand the Caucasian way reproved the colonel for delaying, but he took a very philosophical view, and pointed out that it was extremely doubtful whether he even now had men enough to carry the enormous position, and that he certainly could not do so with exhausted troops. So we had the extraordinary spectacle of our men lying down flat, blowing their fires and drinking their tea and laughing and joking as though they were at a picnic, but when they had finished and had formed up they made short work of the fellows in the trench. But think of what would have happened if we had left this plateau unsearched!"

"On the Baiburt road," writes another Russian officer, "there was one small pass which had been roughly reconnoitered, and through this we were moving some of the heavy guns, not imagining that there were any Turks within ten miles, when a heavy fire was opened from a fir wood a thousand feet above us. The limbers of the guns were a long way in the rear, and there was no way of shelling this enemy from his aerie. There was nothing to do but for the battalion which was acting as escort to the guns to move up the slope under a terrific machine-gun and rifle fire and investigate the strength of the attack. The guns were left on the road, and mules and horses were taken to whatever cover could be found, and an urgent message was sent back to the effect that the convoy was held up, but the majority of the infantry had already passed the danger point. Two mountain batteries were commandeered, however, and these came into action, firing incendiary shells into the wood, which was soon blazing at several points.

"The battle which then began between the Turks who had been ejected from the wood and the gun escort lasted for the greater part of the afternoon. It was not until sunset that two of our

batteries, which had been brought back from the front for the purpose, opened fire upon the Turks' position, and the ambushers were compelled to capitulate. The progress on the left was even more difficult than that which we experienced in the northern sector. The roads were indescribable. Where they mounted and crossed the intervening ridges they were almost impassable, whilst in the valleys the gun carriages sank up to their axles in liquid mud."

From still another source we hear:

"In the Van sector a Russian brigade was held up by a forest fire, started by the Turks, which made all progress impossible. For days a brigade had to sit idle until the fire had burned itself out, and even when they moved forward it was necessary to cover all the munition wagons with wet blankets, and the ashes through which the stolid Russians marched were so hot as to burn away the soles of their boots.

"A curious discovery which was made in this extraordinary march was the remains of a Turkish company which had evidently been caught in the fire they had started and had been unable to escape."

On May 1, 1916, Russian Cossacks were able to drive back Turkish troops, making a stand somewhere west of Erzerum and east of Erzingan. Other detachments of the same service of the Russian army were equally successful on May 2, 1916, in driving back toward Diarbekr resisting Turkish forces west of Mush and Bitlis, and a similar achievement was officially reported on May 3, 1916. On the same date Russian regiments made a successful night attack in the upper Chorok basin which netted some important Turkish positions, which were immediately strongly fortified. May 4, 1916, brought a counterattack on the part of Turkish forces in the Chorok sector at the town of Baiburt, which, however, was repulsed. On the same day the Russians stormed Turkish trenches along the Erzerum-Erzingan road, during which engagement most savage bayonet fighting developed, ending in success for the Russian armies. Turkish attacks west of Bitlis were likewise repulsed. On May 5, 1916, the Turks attempted to regain the trenches in the Erzingan sector lost the



day before, but although their attack was supported by artillery, it was not successful.

The Russian official statement of May 7, 1916, gives some data concerning the booty which the Russians captured at Trebizond. It consisted of eight mounted coast defense guns, fourteen 6-inch guns, one field gun, more than 100 rifles, fifty-three ammunition wagons, supply trains and other war material. This, taken in connection with the fact that practically the entire Turkish garrison escaped, confirms the view expressed previously that the capture of Trebizond was of great importance to the Russians, not so much on account of what they themselves gained thereby, but on account of what the Turks lost by being deprived of their principal harbor on the Black Sea, comparatively close to the Caucasian theater of war.

The Turkish artillery attack of May 5, 1916, in the Erzingan sector was duplicated on May 7, 1916, but this time the Russians used their guns, and apparently with telling effect. For so devastating was the Russian fire directed toward the newly established Turkish trenches that the Turks had to evacuate their entire first line and retire to their second line of defensive works. Throughout the entire day on May 8, 1916, the Turks doggedly attacked the Russian positions. Losses on both sides were heavy, especially so on the Turkish side, which hurled attack after attack against the Russian positions, not desisting until nightfall. Though no positive gain was made thereby, the Russians at least were prevented from further advances. The same day, May 8, 1916, yielded another success for the Russians in the southern sector, south of Mush. There, between that town and Bitlis, stretches one of the numerous mountain ranges, with which this region abounds. On it the Turks held naturally strong positions which had been still more strengthened by means of artificial defense works. A concentrated Russian attack, prepared and supported by artillery fire, drove the Turks not only from these positions, but out of the mountain range.

On May 9, 1916, engagements took place along the entire front. In the center fighting occurred near Mount Koph, in the Chorok basin southeast of Baiburt, and the Turks made some 300 pris-

oners. Farther south a Turkish attack near Mama Khatun was stopped by Russian fire. In the south another Turkish attack in the neighborhood of Kirvaz, about twenty-five miles northwest of Mush, forced back a Russian detachment after capturing some fifty men. All this time the Russians were industriously building fortifications along the Black Sea coast both east and west of Trebizond. During the night of May 9, 1916, the Turks made a successful surprise attack against a Russian camp near Baschkjoej, about thirty-five miles southeast of Mama Khatun. There a Russian detachment consisting of about 500 men, of which one-half was cavalry and one-half infantry, found themselves suddenly surrounded by the bayonets of a superior Turkish force. All, except a small number who managed to escape, were cut to pieces.

As the Russians succeeded in pushing their advance westward, even if only very slowly, they became again somewhat more active in the north along the Black Sea. On May 10, 1916, they were reported advancing both south and southwest of Platana, a small seaport about twelve miles west of Trebizond. Throughout May 11, 1916, engagements of lesser importance took place at various parts of the entire front. During that night the Turks launched another strong night attack in the Erzingan sector, without, however, being able to register any marked success. The same was true of an attack made May 12, 1916, near Mama Khatun. In the south, between Mush and Bitlis, an engagement which was begun on May 10, 1916, concluded with the loss of one Turkish gun, 2,000 rifles and considerable stores of ammunition. In the Chorok sector the Turks succeeded on May 13, 1916, in driving the Russian troops out of their positions on Mount Koph and in forcing them back in an easterly direction for a distance of from four to five miles. There, however, the Russians succeeded in making a stand, though their attempt to regain their positions failed. May 14, 1916, was comparatively uneventful. Some Russian reconnoitering parties clashed with Turkish advance guards near Mama Khatun, and a small force of Kurds was repulsed west of Bitlis. On May 16, 1916, the Russians announced officially that they had occupied Mama Khatun,

a small town on the western Euphrates, about fifty miles west of Erzerum and approximately the same distance from Erzingan. Throughout the balance of May, 1916, fighting along the Caucasian front was restricted almost entirely to clashes between outposts, which in some instances brought slight local successes to the Russian arms, and at other times yielded equally unimportant gains for the Turkish sides. To a certain extent this slowing down undoubtedly was due to the determined resistance on the part of the Turks. It is also quite likely that part of the Russian forces in the north had been diverted earlier in the month to the south in order to assist in the drive against Bagdad and Moone, which was pushed with increased vigor just previous to and right after the capitulation of the Anglo-Indian forces at Kut-el-Amara in Mesopotamia.

## PART VI—CAMPAIGN IN MESOPOTAMIA AND PERSIA

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### CHAPTER XXXI

#### RENEWED ATTEMPT TO RELIEVE KUT-EL-AMARA

AS far as the Turko-English struggle in the Tigris Valley is concerned, the preceding volume carried us to the beginning of March, 1916. On March 8, 1916, an official English communiqué was published which raised high hopes among the Allied nations that the day of delivery for General Townshend's force was rapidly approaching. That day was the ninety-first day of the memorable siege of Kut-el-Amara. On it the English relief force under General Aylmer had reached the second Turkish line at Es-Sinn, only eight miles from Kut-el-Amara. After an all night march the English forces, approaching in three columns against the Dujailar Redoubt, attacked immediately after day-break. Both flanks of the Turkish line were subjected to heavy artillery fire. But, although this resulted quickly in a wild stampede of horses, camels and other transport animals and also inflicted heavy losses in the ranks of the Turkish reinforcements, which immediately came up in close order across the open ground in back of the Turkish position, the English troops could not make any decisive impression on the strongly fortified position. Throughout the entire day, March 8, 1916, the attacks were kept up, but the superior Turkish forces and the strong fortifications that had been thrown up would not yield. Lack of water—all of which had to be brought up from the main camp—made it impossible for the English troops to maintain these attacks be-



yond the end of that day. In spite of the fact that they could see the flash of the guns of their besieged compatriots who were attacking the rear of the Turkish line from Kut, they were forced to give up their attempt to raise the siege. During the night of March 8, 1916, they returned to the main camp, which was located about twenty-three miles from Kut-el-Amara.

The unusual conditions and the immense difficulties which confronted the English relief force may be more easily understood from the following very graphic description of this undertaking rendered by the official representative of the British press with the Tigris Corps:

"The assembly was at the Pools of Siloam, a spot where we used to water our horses, two miles southwest of Thorny Nullah. We left camp at seven, just as it was getting dark. We had gone a mile when we saw the lamps of the assembly posts—thousands of men were to meet here from different points, horse, foot, and guns. They would proceed in three columns to a point south of west, where they would bifurcate and take a new direction, Columns A and B making for the depression south of the Dujailar Redoubt, Column C for a point facing the Turkish lines between the Dujailar and Sinn Aftar Redoubts. There was never such a night march. Somebody quoted Tel-el-Kebir as a precedent, but the difficulties here were doubled. The assembly and guidance of so large a force over ground untrodden by us previously, and featureless save for a nullah and some scattered sand hills, demanded something like genius in discipline and organization.

"I was with the sapper who guided the column. Our odd little party reported themselves to the staff officer under the red lamp of Column A. 'Who are you?' he asked, and it tickled my vanity to think that we, the scouts, were for a moment the most vital organ of the whole machine. If anything miscarried with us, it would mean confusion, perhaps disaster. For in making a flank march round the enemy's position we were disregarding, with justifiable confidence, the first axiom of war.

"We were an odd group. There was the sapper guide. He had his steps to count and his compass to look to when his eye was not on a bearing of the stars. And there was the guard

of the guide to protect him from the—suggestions of doubts as to the correctness of his line. Everything must depend on one head, and any interruption might throw him off his course. As we were starting I heard a digression under the lamp.

“‘I make it half past five from Sirius.’

“‘I make it two fingers left of that.’

“‘Oh, you are going by the corps map.’

“‘Two hundred and six degrees true.’

“‘I was going by magnetic bearing.’

“Ominous warning of what might happen if too many guides directed the march.

“Then there was the man with the bicycle. We had no cyclometer, but two men checked the revolution of the wheel. And there were other counters of steps, of whom I was one, for counting and comparison. From these an aggregate distance was struck. But it was not until we were well on the march that I noticed the man with the pace stick, who staggered and reeled like an inebriated crab in his efforts to extricate his biped from the unevennesses of the ground before he was trampled down by the column. I watched him with a curious fascination, and as I grew sleepier and sleepier that part of my consciousness which was not counting steps, recognized him as a cripple who had come out to Mesopotamia in this special rôle ‘to do his bit.’ His humped back, protruding under his mackintosh as he labored forward, bent into a hoop, must have suggested the idea which was accepted as fact until I pulled myself together at the next halt and heard the mechanical and unimaginative half of me repeat ‘Four thousand, seven hundred, and twenty-one.’ The man raised himself into erectness with a groan, and a crippled greengrocer whom I had known in my youth, to me the basic type of hunchback—became an upstanding British private.

“Walking thus in the dark with the wind in one’s face at a kind of funeral goose step it is very easy to fall asleep. The odds were that we should blunder into some Turkish picket or patrol. Looking back it was hard to realize that the inky masses behind, like a column of following smoke, was an army on the march. The stillness was so profound one heard nothing save

the howl of the jackal, the cry of fighting geese, and the ungreased wheel of an ammunition limber, or the click of a picketing peg against a stirrup.

"The instinct to smoke was almost irresistible. A dozen times one's hands felt for one's pipe, but not a match was struck in all that army of thousands of men. Sometimes one feels that one is moving in a circle. One could swear to lights on the horizon, gesticulating figures on a bank.

"Suddenly we came upon Turkish trenches. They were empty, an abandoned outpost. The column halted, made a circuit. I felt that we were involved in an inextricable coil, a knot that could not be unraveled till dawn. We were passing each other, going different ways, and nobody knew who was who. But we swung into direct line without a hitch. It was a miracle of discipline and leadership.

"At the next long halt, the point of bifurcation, the counter of steps was relieved. An hour after the sapper spoke. The strain was ended. We had struck the sand hills of the Dujailar depression. Then we saw the flash of Townshend's guns at Kut, a comforting assurance of the directness of our line. That the surprise of the Turk was complete was shown by the fires in the Arab encampments, between which we passed silently in the false dawn. A mile or two to our north and west the campfires of the Turks were already glowing.

"Flank guards were sent out. They passed among the Arab tents without a shot being fired. Soon the growing light disclosed our formidable numbers. Ahead of us there was a camp in the nullah itself. An old man just in the act of gathering fuel walked straight into us. He threw himself on his knees at my feet and lifted his hands with a biblical gesture of supplication crying out, 'Ar-rab, Ar-rab,' an effective, though probably unmerited, shibboleth. As he knelt his women at the other end of the camp were driving off the village flock. Here I remembered that I was alone with the guide of a column in an event which ought to have been as historic as the relief of Khartum."

After this unsuccessful attempt at relief comparative quiet reigned for about a week, interrupted only by occasional encoun-

ters between small detachments. On March 11, 1916, English outposts had advanced again about seven miles toward Kut-el-Amara to the neighborhood of Abn Roman, among the sand hills on the right bank of the Tigris. There they surprised at dawn a small Turkish force and made some fifty prisoners, including two officers. Throughout the next two or three days intermittent gunfire and sniping were the only signs of the continuation of the struggle. On March 15, 1916, two Turkish guns were put out of action and during that night the Turks evacuated the sand hills on the right bank of the river, which were promptly occupied by English troops in the early morning hours of March 16, 1916.

During the balance of March, 1916, conditions remained practically unchanged. The siege of General Townshend's force was continued by the Turks along the same lines to which they had adhered from its beginning—a process of starving their opponents gradually into surrender. No attempt was made by them to force the issue, except that on March 23, 1916, the English general reported that his camp at Kut-el-Amara had been subjected to intermittent bombardment by Turkish airships and guns during March 21, 22, and 23, 1916. No serious damage, however, was inflicted.

As spring advanced the difficulties of the English forces attempting the relief of General Townshend increased, for with the coming of spring, there also came about the middle of March—the season of floods. Up in the Armenian highlands, whence the Tigris springs, vast quantities of snow then begin to melt. Throughout March, April, and May, 1916, a greatly increased volume of water finds the regular shallow bed of the Tigris woefully insufficient for its needs. The entire lack of jetties and artificial embankments results in the submersion of vast stretches of land adjacent to the river. Military operations along its banks then become quite impossible, although in many places this impossibility exists throughout the entire year, because the land on both sides of the river for miles and miles has been permitted to deteriorate into bottomless swamps, through which even the ingenuity of highly trained engineering



troops finds it impossible to construct a roadway within the available space of time.

These natural difficulties were still more increased by the fact that the equipment of the relief force was not all that might have been expected. This is well illustrated by the following letter from a South African officer, published in the "Cape Times:"

"The river Tigris plays the deuce with the surrounding country when it gets above itself, from melting snows coming down from the Caucasus, when it frequently tires of its own course and tries another. The river is the only drinking water, and you can imagine the state of it when Orientals have anything to do with it. A sign of its fruity state is the fact that sharks abound right up to Kurna.

"We have all kinds of craft up here, improvised for use higher up. His Majesty's ship *Clio*, a sloop, was marked down in 1914 to be destroyed as obsolete, but she, with her sister ships, *Odin* and *Espiegle*, have done great work in the battles to date. Now that we have got as far as Amara and Nassariyeh, the vessels that give the greatest assistance are steam launches with guns on them, flat-bottomed Irrawaddy paddle steamers. For troops we have 'nakelas' a local sailing vessel, and have 'bellums,' a long, narrow, small cone-shaped thing, holding from fifteen to twenty men; barges for animals, etc. Rafts have been used higher up to mount guns on. Here we have also motor boats.

"The difficulties as we advance are increased to a certain extent, though country and climate are improving. Our lines of communication will lengthen out, and we shall have to look out for Arab tribes raiding. Our aerial service is increasing; we have now a Royal Navy flight section, which has hydroplanes as well."

In spite of these handicaps, however, General Lake, in command of the English relief force, reported on April 5, 1916, that a successful advance was in progress and that the Tigris Corps at five o'clock in the morning of that day had made an attack against the Turkish position at Umm-el-Hannah, and had car-

ried the Turkish intrenchments. Umm-el-Hannah is at a much greater distance from Kut-el-Amara than Es-Sinn which was reached on March 8, 1916, but from where the relief force had to withdraw again that same night to a position only a short distance beyond Umm-el-Hannah. However, it is located on the left bank of the Tigris, the same as Kut-el-Amara, and the success of taking this position, small as it was, promised therefore, once more an early relief of General Townshend.

This successful attack against Umm-el-Hannah on April 5, 1916, was carried out by the Thirteenth Division, which had previously fought at the Dardanelles. It now stood under the command of Lieutenant General Sir G. Gorringe who had succeeded to General Aylmer. The most careful preparations had been made for it. For many weeks British engineering troops had pushed forward a complicated series of sap works, covering some sixteen miles and allowing the British forces to approach to within 100 yards of the Turkish intrenchments. With the break of dawn on April 5, 1916, bombing parties were sent forward, whose cheers soon announced the fact that they had invaded the first line of Turkish trenches. Already on the previous day the way had been cleared for them by their artillery, which by means of incessant fire had destroyed the elaborate wire entanglements which the Turks had constructed in front of their trenches.

The storming of the first line of trenches was followed quickly by an equally successful attack on the second line. By 6 a. m., one hour after the beginning of the attack, the third line had been carried with the assistance of concentrated machine-gun and artillery fire. Within another hour the same troops had stormed and occupied the fourth and fifth lines of the Turks. The latter thereupon were forced to fall back upon their next line of defensive works at Felahieh and Sanna-i-Yat, about four and six miles respectively farther up the river. Reenforcements were quickly brought up from the Turkish main position at Es-Sinn, some farther ten miles up, and with feverish haste the intrenchments were made stronger. General Gorringe's aeroplane scouts promptly observed and reported these

operations, and inasmuch as the ground between these new positions and the positions which had just been gained by the British troops is absolutely flat and offers no means of cover whatsoever, the British advance was stopped for the time being.

In the meantime the Third British Division under General Keary had advanced along the right bank of the river and had carried Turkish trenches immediately in front of the Felahieh position. In the afternoon of April 5, 1916, the Turks tried to regain these trenches by means of a strong counterattack with infantry, cavalry and artillery, but were unable to dislodge the British forces.

With nightfall General Gorringe again returned to the attack along the left bank and stormed the Felahieh position. Here, too, the Turks had constructed a series of successive deep trenches, some of which were taken by the British battalions only at the point of the bayonet. This attack as well as all the previous attacks were, by the nature of the ground over which they had to be fought, frontal attacks. For all the Turkish positions rested on one side of the river and on the other on the Suwacha swamps, excluding, therefore, any flank attack on the part of the British forces.

Again General Gorringe halted his advance, influenced undoubtedly by the open ground and increasing difficulties caused by stormy weather and floods. April 6, 7, and 8, 1916, were devoted by the British forces to the closest possible reconnoissance of the Sanna-i-Yat position and to the necessary preparatory measures for its attack, while the Turks energetically strengthened this position by means of new intrenchments and additional reinforcements from their position at Es-Sinn.

With the break of dawn on April 19, 1916, General Gorringe again attacked the Turkish lines at Sanna-i-Yat. The attack was preceded by heavy artillery fire lasting more than an hour. In the beginning the British troops entered some of the Turkish trenches, but were driven back at the point of the bayonet. After this stood success. Again the floods came to the assistance of the Turkish troops. Increasing, as they were, day by day,

they covered more and more of the ground adjoining the river bed and thereby narrowed the front, on which an attack could be delivered, so much so that most of its force was bound to be lost. According to Turkish reports the British lost over 3,000 in dead. Although the British commanding general stated that his losses were much below this number, they must have been very heavy, from the very nature of the ground and climatic conditions, and much heavier, indeed, than those of the Turks which officially were stated to have been only seventy-nine killed, 168 wounded and nine missing.

After this unsuccessful attempt to advance further a lull ensued for a few days. On April 12, 1916, however, the Third Division again began to attack on the right bank of the Tigris and pushed back the Turks over a distance varying from one and one-half to three miles. At the same time a heavy gale inundated some of the advanced Turkish trenches on the left bank at Sanna-i-Yat with the waters from the Suwatcha marshes. This necessitated a hurried withdrawal to new positions, which British guns made very costly for the Turks. A heavy gale made further operations impossible for either side on April 13 and 14, 1916. On the following day, April 15, 1916, the Third Division again advanced a short distance on the right bank, occupying some of the advanced Turkish trenches. Further trenches were captured on April 16 and 17, 1916, at which time the Turks lost between 200 and 300 in killed, 180 by capture as well as two field and five machine guns, whereas the English losses were stated to have been much smaller. This was due to the fact that for once the English forces had been able to place their guns so that their infantry was enabled to advance under their protection up to the very trenches of the Turks, which, at the same time, were raked by the gunfire and fell comparatively easily into the hands of the attackers. The latter immediately pressed their advantage and succeeded in advancing some hundred yards beyond the position previously held by the Turks near Beit Eissa. Here, as well as during the fighting of the few preceding days, the British troops were frequently forced to advance wading in water up to their waist,



after having spent the night before in camps which had no more solid foundation than mud. They were now within four miles of the Turkish position at Es-Sinn, which in turn was less than ten miles from Kut-el-Amara. However, this position had been made extremely strong by the Turks and extended much further to the north and south of the Tigris than any of the positions captured so far by the British relief force.

In spite of this the Turks recognized the necessity of defending the intermediate territory to the best of their ability. After the British success at Beit Eissa in the early morning of April 17, 1916, they again brought up strong reenforcements from Es-Sinn, and at once launched two strong counterattacks, both of which, however, were repulsed by the British.

During the night of April 17 and 18, 1916, the Turks again made a series of counterattacks in force on the right bank of the Tigris, and this time they succeeded in pushing back the British lines between 500 and 800 yards. According to English reports, about 10,000 men were involved on the Turkish side among whom there were claimed to be some Germans. The same source estimates Turkish losses in dead alone to have been more than 3,000, and considerably in excess of the total British losses. On the other hand the official Turkish report places the latter as above 4,000, and also claims the capture of fourteen machine guns. Storms set in again on April 18 and 19, 1916, and prevented further operations.

Beginning with April 20, 1916, the relief force prepared for another attack of the Sanna-i-Yat position on the left bank of the Tigris, by a systematic bombardment of it, lasting most of that night, the following night, April 21, 1916, and the early morning of April 22, 1916. On that day another attack was launched. Again the flooded condition of the country fatally handicapped the British troops. To begin with, there was only enough dry ground available for one brigade to attack, and that on a very much contracted front against superior forces. To judge from the official British report, the leading formations of this brigade gallantly overcame the severe obstacles in their way in the form of logs and trenches full of water. But, al-

though they succeeded in penetrating the Turkish first and second lines, and in some instances even in reaching the third lines, their valor brought no lasting success, because it was impossible for reenforcements to come up quickly enough in the face of the determined Turkish resistance strongly supported by machine-gun fire. According to the Turkish reports, the British lost very heavily without being able to show any gain at the end of the day. The same condition obtained on the right bank of the Tigris. In spite of this failure the bombardment of the Sanna-i-Yat position was kept up by the British artillery throughout April 23, 1916. On the next day, April 24, 1916, the British troops again registered a small success by being able to extend their line at Beit Eissa, on the right Tigris bank—in the direction of the Umm-el-Brahm swamps. On the left bank, however, the line facing the Sanna-i-Yat position remained in its original location.

All this time General Townshend was able to communicate freely by means of wireless with the relief forces. As the weeks rolled by it became evident that his position was becoming rapidly untenable on account of the unavoidable decrease of all supplies. Having had his lines of communication cut off ever since December 3, 1915, it was now almost five months since he had been forced to support the lives of some 10,000 men from the meager supplies which they had with them at the time of their hurried retreat from Ctesiphon to Kut-el-Amara, which were only slightly increased by whatever stores had been found at the latter place. So complete was the circle which the Turks had thrown around Kut that not a pound of food had come through to the besieged garrison. It was well known that the latter had been forced for weeks to exist on horse flesh. Beyond that, however, few details concerning the life of the Anglo-Indian force during the siege were known at that time except that they had not been subjected to any attack on the part of the Turks.

During the night of April 24, 1916, one more desperate effort was made to bring relief to General Townshend's force. A ship, carrying supplies, was sent up the Tigris. Although this under-

taking was carried out most courageously in the face of the Turkish guns commanding the entire stretch of the Tigris between Sanna-i-Yat and the Turkish lines below Kut-el-Amara, it miscarried, for the boat went aground near Magasis, about four miles below Kut-el-Amara. Another desperate effort to get at least some supplies to Kut by means of aeroplanes also failed. The British forces had only some comparatively antiquated machines, which quickly became the prey of the more modern equipment of the Turks.

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## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE SURRENDER OF KUT-EL-AMARA

BY the end of April it had become only a question of days, almost of hours, when it would be necessary for General Townshend to surrender. It was, therefore, no surprise when in the morning of April 29, 1916, a wireless report was received from him reading as follows:

"Have destroyed my guns, and most of my munitions are being destroyed; and officers have gone to Khalil, who is at Madug, to say am ready to surrender. I must have some food here, and cannot hold on any more. Khalil has been told to-day, and a deputation of officers has gone on a launch to bring some food from Julnar."

A few hours afterward another message, the last one to come through, reached the relief forces, announcing the actual surrender:

"I have hoisted the white flag over Kut fort and towns, and the guards will be taken over by a Turkish regiment, which is approaching. I shall shortly destroy wireless. The troops at 2 p. m. to camp near Shamran."

It was on the hundred and forty-third day of the siege that General Townshend was forced by the final exhaustion of his supplies to hoist the white flag of surrender. According to the official British statements this involved a force of "2970 Brit-

ish troops of all ranks and services and some 6,000 Indian troops and their followers."

About one o'clock in the afternoon of April 29, 1916, a pre-arranged signal from the wireless indicated that the wireless had been destroyed. It was then that the British emissaries were received by the Turkish commander in chief, Khalil Bey Pasha, in order to arrange the terms of surrender. According to these it was to be unconditional. But the Turks, who expressed the greatest admiration for the bravery of the British, readily agreed to a number of arrangements in order to reduce as much as possible the suffering on the part of the captured British forces who by then were near to starvation. As the Turks themselves were not in a position to supply their captives with sufficiently large quantities of food, it was arranged that such supplies should be sent up the Tigris from the base of the relief force. It was also arranged that wounded prisoners should be exchanged and during the early part of May, 1916, a total of almost 1,200 sick and wounded reached headquarters of the Tigris Corps as quickly as the available ships could transport them.

The civil population of Kut-el-Amara had not been driven out by General Townshend as had been surmised. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that a few civilians who, driven by hunger, had attempted to escape, had been shot promptly by the Turks. Rather than jeopardize the lives of some 6,000 unfortunate Arabs, the English commander permitted them to remain and the same rations that went to the British troops were distributed to the Arabs. This, of course, hastened the surrender, an eventuality on which the Turks undoubtedly had counted when they adopted such stringent measures against their own subjects who were caught in their attempt to flee from Kut. Although Khalil Pasha refused to give any pledge in regard to the treatment of these civilians, he stated to the British emissaries that he contemplated no reprisals or persecutions in regard to the civilian population and that their future treatment at the hands of the Turkish troops would depend entirely on their future behavior.



With the least possible delay the Turks moved their prisoners from Kut-el-Amara to Bagdad and from there to Constantinople, from which place it was reported on June 11, 1916, that General Townshend had arrived and, after having been received with military honors, had been permitted to visit the United States ambassador who looked after British interests in Turkey during the war. An official Turkish statement announced that together with General Townshend four other generals had been captured as well as 551 other officers, of whom about one-half were Europeans and another half Indians. The same announcement also claimed that the British had destroyed most of their guns and other arms, but that in spite of this the Turks captured about forty cannon, twenty machine guns, almost 5,000 rifles, large amounts of ammunition, two ships, four automobiles, and three aeroplanes.

It was only after the capitulation of General Townshend that details became available concerning the suffering to which the besieged army was subjected and the heroism with which all this was borne by officers and men, whites and Hindus alike. An especially clear picture of conditions existing in Kut-el-Amara during the siege may be gained from a letter sent to Bombay by a member of the Indian force and later published in various newspapers. It says in part:

"Wounded and diseased British and native troops are arriving from Kut-el-Amara, having been exchanged for an equal number of Turkish prisoners. They bring accounts of Townshend's gallant defense of Mesopotamia's great strategic point. Some are mere youngsters while others were soldiers before the war.

"All are frightfully emaciated and are veritable skeletons as the result of their starvation and sufferings. The absolute exhaustion of food necessitated the capitulation, and if General Townshend had not surrendered nearly the whole force would have died of starvation within a week.

"The Turkish General Khalil Pasha provided a river steamer for the unexchanged badly wounded, the others marching overland. Because of the wasted condition of the prisoners the marches were limited to five miles a day.

"When the capitulation was signed only six mules were left alive to feed a garrison and civilian population of nearly 20,000 persons.

"In the early stages of the siege, the Arab traders sold stocks of jam, biscuits, and canned fish at exorbitant prices. The stores were soon exhausted and all were forced to depend upon the army commissariat. Later a dead officer's kit was sold at auction. Eighty dollars was paid for a box of twenty-five cigars and twenty dollars for fifty American cigarettes.

"In February the ration was a pound of barley-meal bread and a pound and a quarter of mule or horse flesh. In March the ration was reduced to half a pound of bread and a pound of flesh. In April it was four ounces of bread and twelve ounces of flesh, which was the allowance operative at the time of the surrender. The food problem was made more difficult by the Indian troops, who because of their religion refused to eat flesh, fearing they would break the rules of their caste by doing so.

"When ordinary supplies were diminished a sacrifice was demanded of the British troops in order to feed the Indians, whose allowance of grain was increased while that of the British was decreased. Disease spread among the horses and hundreds were shot and buried. The diminished grain and horse feed supply necessitated the shooting of nearly 2,000 animals. The fattest horses and mules were retained as food for forty days.

"Kut-el-Amara was searched as with a fine tooth comb and considerable stores of grain were discovered beneath houses. These were commandeered, the inhabitants previously self-supporting receiving the same ration as the soldiers and Sepoys. It was difficult to use the grain because of inability to grind it into flour, but millstones were finally dropped into the camp by aeroplanes.

"In the first week in February scurvy appeared, and aeroplanes dropped seeds, which General Townshend ordered planted on all the available ground, and the gardens bore sufficient fruit to supply a few patients in the hospital.

"Mule and horse meat and sometimes a variety of donkey meat were boiled in the muddy Tigris water without salt or



seasoning. The majority became used to horseflesh and their main complaint was that the horse gravy was like clear oil.

"Stray cats furnished many a delicate 'wild rabbit' supper. A species of grass was cooked as a vegetable and it gave a relish to the horseflesh. Tea being exhausted, the soldiers boiled bits of ginger root in water. Latterly aeroplanes dropped some supplies. These consisted chiefly of corn, flour, cocoa, sugar, tea, and cigarettes.

"During the last week of the siege many Arabs made attempts to escape by swimming the river and going to the British lines, twenty miles below. Of nearly 100, only three or four succeeded in getting away. One penetrated the Turkish lines by floating in an inflated mule skin."

Another intimate description was furnished by the official British press representative with the Tigris Corps and is based on the personal narratives of some of the British officers who, after having been in the Kut hospital for varying periods of the siege on account of sickness or wounds, were exchanged for wounded Turkish officers taken by the relief force. According to this the real privations of the garrison began in the middle of February and were especially felt in the hospital.

"When the milk gave out the hospital diet was confined to corn, flour, or rice water for the sick, and ordinary rations for the wounded. On April 21, 1916, the 4 oz. grain rations gave out. From the 22d to the 25th the garrison subsisted on the two days' reserve rations issued in January; and from the 25th to the 29th on supplies dropped by aeroplanes.

"The troops were so exhausted when Kut capitulated that the regiments who were holding the front line had remained there a fortnight without being relieved. They were too weak to carry back their kit. During the last days of the siege the daily death rate averaged eight British and twenty-one Indians.

"All the artillery, cavalry, and transport animals had been consumed before the garrison fell. When the artillery horses had gone the drivers of the field batteries formed a new unit styled 'Kut Foot.' One of the last mules to be slaughtered had been on three Indian frontier campaigns, and wore the ribbons



round its neck. The supply and transport butcher had sent it back twice, refusing to kill it, but in the end it had to go with the machine-gun mules. Mule flesh was generally preferred to horse, and mule fat supplied good dripping; also an improvised substitute for lamp oil.

"The tobacco famine was a great privation, but the garrison did not find the enforced abstention cured their craving, as every kind of substitute was there. An Arab brand, a species similar to that smoked in Indian hookahs, was exhausted early in April. After that lime leaves were smoked, or ginger, or baked tea dregs. In January English tobacco fetched forty-eight rupees a half pound (equal to eight shillings an ounce).

"Just before General Townshend's force entered Kut a large consignment of warm clothing had arrived, the gift of the British Red Cross Society. This was most opportune and probably saved many lives. The garrison had only the summer kit they stood up in.

"Different units saw very little of each other during the siege. At the beginning indirect machine-gun and rifle fire, in addition to shells, swept the whole area day and night. The troops only left the dugouts for important defense work. During the late phase when the fire slackened officers and men had little strength for unnecessary walking. Thus there was very little to break the monotony of the siege in the way of games, exercise, or amusements, but on the right bank two battalions in the licorice factory, the 110th Mahratas and the 120th Infantry, were better off, and there was dead ground here—'a pitch of about fifty by twenty yards'—where they could play hockey and cricket with pick handles and a rag ball. They also fished, and did so with success, supplementing the rations at the same time. Two companies of Norfolks joined them in turn, crossing by ferry at night, and they appreciated the relief."

A personal acquaintance of the heroic defense of Kut-el-Amara drew in a letter to the London "Weekly Times" the following attractive picture of this strong personality:

"A descendant of the famous Lord Townshend who fought with Wolfe at Quebec, and himself heir to the marquise, General

# ASIA AND AFRICA CANADA AND AUSTRALIA

IN

EUROPE'S WAR • BATTLE FRONTS IN MESOPOTAMIA, EGYPT,  
AND CENTRAL AFRICA, AND SOLDIERS IN CANADA



Copyright, American Press Association

An outpost of native soldiers from the Belgian Congo. From this colony, Belgian troops invaded German East Africa and pressed back the Germans in the regions of Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika



British gunners and gun on an ammunition barge on the Tigris. A part of the barge is roofed over as a relief from the heat of the sun.  
The possession of the valley of this storied river is most important for Great Britain, Russia, Germany, and Turkey



Copyright, Central News Photo Service

A British supply station in Mesopotamia. The aviator is on a relief trip to Kut-el-Amara, where bags of food will be dropped in the hope of aiding General Townshend's forces





Copyright, Central News Photo Service

A camel transport on the frontier of Western Egypt, where Great Britain is compelled to maintain military forces to repel uprisings among the desert tribes. Camels perform war service here and in Arabia



Copyright, American Press Association

British steamers used for hospital service are leaving the river port of Basra, sixty miles from the head of the Persian Gulf, to carry wounded British Indian soldiers back to India



Copyright, United Fruit & Sugar Corp.

Canada has responded magnificently to the call of the Empire for men and is constantly training troops for the battle fields of Europe  
Here Canadian soldiers are packing their kits and making ready for the voyage across the Atlantic



Copyright, International Film Service

Australian troops in the square of Kasr-El-Nil Barracks, in Cairo, Egypt. They are ready to leave for the Suez Canal zone of operations, which Great Britain must defend against the Turks





Copyright L. Medlem Photo Service

A huge German gun, which has just arrived in Constantinople, is received and named by Turkish and German officers with special ceremonies before it is sent to the battle front

Townshend set himself from boyhood to maintain the fighting traditions of his family. His military fighting has been one long record of active service in every part of the world. Engaged first in the Nile expedition of 1884-85, Townshend next took part in the fighting on the northwest frontier of India in 1891-92, when he leaped into fame as commander of the escort of the British agent during the siege of Chitral. He fought in the Sudan expedition of 1898, and served on the staff in the South African War. In the peaceful decade which followed Townshend acted for a time as military attaché in Paris, was on the staff in India, and finally commanded the troops at Bloemfontein, Orange River Colony.

"The outbreak of the Great War found him in command of a division in India, longing to be at the front in France, but destined, as events turned out, to win greater fame in Mesopotamia. All accounts agree as to the masterly strategy with which he defeated Nur-ed-Din Pasha at Kut-el-Amara, and subsequently fought the battle of Ctesiphon. Those two battles and his heroic endurance of the long siege of Kut have given his name a permanent place in the annals of the British army.

"Townshend has always attributed his success as a soldier to his constant study of the campaigns of Napoleon, a practice which he has long followed for a regular period of every day wherever he has happened to be serving. He has mastered the Napoleonic battle fields at first hand, and is an ardent collector of Napoleonic literature and relics. Everyone who knows him is familiar with the sight of the paraphernalia of his studies in peace time—the textbooks and maps, spread on the ground or on an enormous table, to which he devotes his morning hours. During the present campaign his letters have been full of comparisons with the difficulties which confronted Napoleon.

"But Townshend possesses other qualities besides his zeal for his profession, and one of them at least must have stood him in good stead during these anxious months. He is indomitably serene and cheerful, a lover of amusement himself and well able to amuse others. In London and Paris he is nearly as well known in the world of playwrights and actors as in the world

of soldiers. He can sing a good song and tell a good story. Like Baden-Powell, the hero of another famous siege, he is certain to have kept his gallant troops alert and interested during the long period of waiting for the relief which never came. Up to the last his messages to the outside world have been full of cheery optimism and soldierly fortitude. No general was ever less to blame for a disastrous enterprise or better entitled to the rewards of success."

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### CHAPTER XXXIII

#### SPRING AND SUMMER TRENCH WAR ON THE TIGRIS

AFTER the surrender of Kut-el-Amara a lull of a few weeks occurred. The Turkish forces seemed to be satisfied for the time being with their victory over their English opponents for which they had striven so long. The English forces below Kut-el-Amara likewise seemed to have ceased their activities as soon as the fall of Kut had become an established fact.

Almost for three weeks this inactivity was maintained. On May 19, 1916, however, both sides resumed military operations. The Turks on that day vacated an advanced position on the south bank of the Tigris at Beit Eissa, which formed the southern prolongation of the Sanna-i-Yat position. On the north bank the latter was still held strongly by the Sultan's forces.

Immediately following this move the English troops, who under General Sir Gorringe had attempted the relief of Kut-el-Amara, attacked. Advancing about three miles south of the Tigris and south of the Umm-el-Brahm marshes, they threw themselves against the southern end of the Turkish position at Es-Sinn. The latter is about seven miles west of the former and about the same distance east of Kut-el-Amara. It began on the north bank of the Tigris, a few miles north of the Suwacha marshes, continued between these and the Tigris and for almost five miles in a southeasterly direction. On its southern end the



Turks had erected a strong redoubt, known under the name Dujailar Redoubt, from which a strong line of six lesser redoubts run in a southwesterly direction to the Shatt-al-hai. This body of water is the ancient bed of the Tigris. In the first half of the year it is a navigable stream, carrying the waters of the Tigris across the desert to the Euphrates near Nasiriyeh, a town which British forces have held since the spring of 1915. It was against the key of this very strong line of defense, the Dujailar Redoubt, which General Gorringer's battalions attacked. At various other times before English troops had attempted to carry this point, but had never succeeded. This time, however, they did meet with success. In spite of strong resistance they stormed and carried the position.

On the same day, May 19, 1916, it was officially announced that a force of Russian cavalry had joined General Gorringer's troops. This cavalry detachment, of course, was part of the Russian forces operating in the region of Kermanshah in Persia. Inasmuch as these troops were then all of 200 miles from Kut-el-Amara and had to pass through a rough and mountainous country, entirely lacking in roads and inhabited by hostile and extremely ferocious Kurdish hillmen, the successful dash of this cavalry detachment was little short of marvelous. The difficulties which had to be faced and the valor which was exhibited is interestingly described by the official British press representative with the Mesopotamian forces:

"The Cossacks' ride across country was a fine and daring achievement, an extreme test of our Allies' hardness, mobility, and resource. Their route took them across a mountainous territory which has been a familiar landmark in the plains where we have been fighting for the last few months.

"The country traversed was rough and precipitous and the track often difficult for mules. They crossed passes over 8,000 feet high. Enemy forces were likely to be encountered at any moment, as these hills are infested with warlike tribes, whose attitude at the best might be described as decidedly doubtful.

"Their guide was untrustworthy. He roused their suspicions by constant attempts to mislead them, and eventually he had to



point the way with a rope round his neck. Nevertheless, they met with no actual opposition during the whole journey other than a few stray shots at long range.

"They traveled light. For transport they had less than one pack animal for ten men. These carried ammunition, cooking pots, and a tent for officers. Otherwise, beyond a few simple necessities, they had no other kit than what they stood up in, and they lived on the country, purchasing barley, flour, rice, and sheep from the villagers. Fodder and fuel were always obtainable.

"For ambulance they had only one assistant surgeon, provided with medical wallets, but none of these Cossacks fell sick. They are a hard lot.

"Their last march was one of thirty miles, during which five of their horses died of thirst or exhaustion on the parched desert. and they reached camp after nightfall. Yet, after a dinner which was given in their honor, they were singing and dancing all night and did not turn in till one in the morning.

"The ride of the Cossacks establishing direct contact between the Russian force in Persia and the British force on the Tigris, of course, has impressed the tribesmen on both sides of the frontier."

On the next day the Turks withdrew all their forces who, on the south bank of the Tigris, had held the Es-Sinn position. Only at a bridge across the Shatt-al-Hai, about five miles below its junction with the Tigris, they left some rear guards. On the north bank of the Tigris they continued to hold, not only the Es-Sinn position, but also the Sanna-i-Yat position, some eight miles farther down the river. This meant that General Gorringe not only had carried an important position, but also that he had advanced the British lines on the south bank of the Tigris by about ten miles, for on May 20, 1916, the British positions were established along a line running from the village of Magasis, on the south bank of the Tigris, about five miles east of Kut-el-Amara, to a point on the Shatt-al-Hai, about equally distant from Kut.

The withdrawal of the Turkish forces on the south bank of the Tigris naturally left their positions on the north bank very much

exposed to British attacks. It was, therefore, not at all surprising that English artillery subjected the Turks on the north bank to heavy bombardments during the following days, nor that this fire was extremely effective. However, in spite of this fact, the Turks continued to maintain their positions on the north bank of the Tigris.

Throughout the balance of May, June, and July, 1916, nothing of importance occurred in Mesopotamia. The temperature in that part of Asia during the early summer rises to such an extent that military operations become practically impossible. It is true that from time to time unimportant skirmishes between outposts and occasional artillery duels of very limited extent took place. But they had no influence on the general situation or on the location of the respective positions.

During the early part of the month the British trenches on the north bank of the Tigris were pushed forward a short distance, until they were within 200 yards of the Turkish position, Sanna-i-Yat, where they remained for the balance of midsummer. To the south of Magasis, on the south bank of the river, British troops occupied an advanced position about three and one-half miles south of the main position. Then they stopped there too. About the same time, June 10, 1916, Turkish guns sunk three barges on the Tigris, the only actual success which the Sultan's forces won since the fall of Kut-el-Amara.

Along the Euphrates, where British troops had held certain positions ever since 1915, there was also an almost entire lack of activity, except that occasional small and entirely local punitive expeditions became necessary in order to hold in hand the Arab tribes of the neighborhood.

Climatic conditions continued extremely trying, and enforced further desistance from military activity until, toward the end of July, relief in the form of the *shamal* (northwest wind) would come and once more make it possible to resume operations.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

## RUSSIAN ADVANCE TOWARD BAGDAD

COINCIDENT with the Russian advance in Armenia and the English attempt at capturing the city of Bagdad by advancing up the Tigris, the Russian General Staff also directed a strong attack against this ancient Arabian city from the northeast through Persia.

Before the Mesopotamian plain, in which Bagdad is situated, could be reached from Persia the mountains along the Persian-Turkish frontier had to be crossed, an undertaking full of difficulties.

Just as in Armenia, here completed railroads were lacking entirely. Such roads as were available were for the most part in the poorest possible condition. The mountains themselves could be crossed only at a few points through passes located at great height, where the caravans that had traveled for centuries and centuries between Persia and Mesopotamia had blasted a trail. At only one point to the north of Bagdad was there a break in the chain of mountains that separated Persia from Mesopotamia. That was about one hundred miles northeast of Bagdad in the direction of the Persian city of Kermanshah. There one Russian army was advancing undoubtedly with the twofold object of reaching and capturing Bagdad and of submitting the Turkish army operating in that sector to an attack from this source as well as from the British army advancing along the Tigris. A Russian success at this point would have meant practically either the capture of all the Turkish forces or their ultimate destruction. For the only avenue of escape that would have been left to them would have been across the desert into Syria. And although there were a number of caravan routes available for this purpose, it would have been reasonably sure that most of the Turkish forces attempting such a retreat would have been lost. For a modern army of the size operating around Bagdad could not have been safely brought

across the desert with all the supplies and ammunition indispensable for its continued existence.

In order to prevent the escape of these Turkish forces in a northerly direction along the Tigris and the line of the projected but uncompleted part of the Bagdad railroad, the Russians had launched another attack from the north. This second army advanced to the south of the region around Lake Urumiah, a large body of water less than fifty miles east of the Turko-Persian border. This attack was directed against another important Arabian city, Mosul. This town, too, was located on the Tigris, and on the line of the Bagdad railroad, about 200 miles northwest of Bagdad.

Still another Russian attack was developed by a third army, advancing about halfway between the other two army groups and striking at Mesopotamia from Persia slightly north of the most easterly point of the Turkish frontier.

Broadly speaking the Russian attack through Persia covered a front of about 200 miles. It must not be understood, however, that this was a continuous "front" of the same nature as the front in the western and eastern theaters of war in Europe. The undeveloped condition of the country made the establishment of a continuous front not only impossible, but unnecessary. Each of the three Russian groups were working practically independent of each other, except that their operations were planned and executed in such a way that their respective objectives were to be reached simultaneously. Even that much cooperation was made extremely difficult, because of the lack of any means of communication in a horizontal direction. No roads worthy of that name, parallel to the Turko-Persian frontier, existed. Telegraph or telephone lines, of course, were entirely lacking, except such as were established by the advancing armies. How great the difficulties were which confronted both the attacking and the defending armies in this primitive country can, therefore, readily be understood. They were still more increased by the climatic conditions which prevail during the winter and early spring. If fighting in the comparatively highly developed regions of the Austro-Italian mountains was fraught with problems that at times seemed al-



most impossible of solution, what then must it have been in the more or less uncivilized and almost absolutely undeveloped districts of Persian "Alps!" The difficulties that were overcome, the suffering which was the share of both Russians and Turks make a story the full details of which will not be told—if ever told at all—for a long time to come. No daily communiqué, no vivid description from the pen of famous war correspondents acquaints us of the details of the heroic struggle that for months and months progressed in these distant regions of the "near East." Not even "letters from the front" guide us to any extent. For where conditions are such that even the transport of supplies and ammunition becomes a problem that requires constantly ingenuity of the highest degree, the transmission of mail becomes a matter which can receive consideration only very occasionally. Whatever will be known for a long time to come about this campaign is restricted to infrequent official statements made by the Russian and Turkish General Staffs, announcing the taking of an important town on the crossing of a mountain pass, up to then practically unknown to the greatest part of the civilized world.

It was such a statement from the Russian General Staff, that had announced the fall of Kermanshah on February 27, 1916. This was an important victory for the southernmost Russian army. For this ancient Persian town lies on the main caravan route from Mesopotamia to Teheran, passing over the high Zaros range, as well as on other roads, leading to Tabriz in the north and to Kut-el-Amara and Basra in the south. It brought this Russian army within less than 200 miles of Bagdad. Toward this goal the advance now was pushed steadily, and on March 1, 1916, Petrograd announced that the pursuit of the enemy to the west of Kermanshah continued and had yielded the capture of two more guns. The next important success gained by the Russians was announced on March 12, 1916, when the town of Kerind was occupied. This town, too, is located on the road to Bagdad and its occupation represented a Russian advance of about fifty miles in less than two weeks, no mean accomplishment in the face of a fairly determined resistance.



THE RUSSIANS IN PERSIA

On March 22, 1916, it was officially announced that a Russian column, advancing from Teheran, to the south, had reached and occupied Ispaha, the ancient Persian capital in central Persia. This, of course, had no direct bearing on the Russian advance against Mosul and Bagdad, except that it increased Russian influence in Persia and by that much strengthened the position and security of any Russian troops operating anywhere else in that country.

Fighting between the northernmost Russian army and detachments of Turks and Kurds was reported on March 24, 1916, in the region south of Lake Urumiah. Throughout the balance of March, 1916, and during April, 1916, similar engagements took place continuously in this sector. On the Turkish side both regular infantry and detachments of Kurds opposed the Russian advance in the direction of Mosul and the Tigris. Russian successes were announced officially on April 10 and 12, 1916, and again on May 3, 1916.

In the meantime the advance toward Bagdad also progressed. On May 1, 1916, the Russians captured some Turkish guns and a number of ammunition wagons to the west of Kerind. On May 6, 1916, a Turkish fortified position in the same locality was taken by storm and a considerable quantity of supplies were captured.

Up to this time the Russian reports were more or less indefinite, announcing simply from time to time progress of the advance in the direction of Bagdad. From Kerind, captured early in March, 1916, two roads lead into Mesopotamia, one by way of Mendeli, and another more circuitous, but more frequented and, therefore, in better condition, by way of Khanikin. Not until May 10, 1916, did it become apparent that the Russians had chosen the latter. On that day they announced the occupation of the town of Kasr-i-Shirin, about twenty miles from the Turkish border, between Kerind and Khanikin. Not only were the Russian forces now within 110 miles of Bagdad—an advance of forty-five miles since the capture of Kerind—but they were also getting gradually out of the mountains into the Mesopotamian plain. At Kasr-i-Shirin, they took important Turkish munition

reserves, comprising several hundred thousand cartridges, many shells and hand grenades, telegraph material, and a camel supply convoy laden with biscuits, rice, and sugar.

Five days later, on May 15, 1916, another important Russian success was announced, this time further north. The Russian forces that had been fighting for a long time ever since the early part of 1915 to the south of Lake Urumiah, and whose progress in the direction of Mosul was reported at long intervals, were now reported to have reached the Turkish town of Rowandiz. This represented an advance of over 100 miles from the town of Urumiah and carried the Russian troops some twenty-five miles across the frontier into the Turkish province of Mosul. Rowandiz is about 100 miles east of Mosul, and in order to reach it it was necessary for the Russian forces to cross the formidable range of mountains that runs along the Turko-Persian border and reaches practically its entire length, a height of 8,000 to 10,000 feet.

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## CHAPTER XXXV

### TURKISH OFFENSIVE AND RUSSIAN COUNTER- OFFENSIVE IN ARMENIA AND PERSIA

ON the last day of May, 1916, the Turks scored their first substantial success against the Russians since the fall of Erzerum. Having received reenforcements, the Turkish center assumed the offensive between the Armenian Taurus and Baiburt and forced the Russians to evacuate Mama Khatun. This was followed by a withdrawal of the Russian lines in that region for a distance of about ten miles.

For the next few days the Turks were able to maintain their new offensive in full strength. The center of the Russian right wing was forced back continuously until it had reached a line almost twenty-five miles east of its former positions.

In the south, too, the Turkish forces scored some successes against the Russian troops, who had been pushing toward the



Tigris Valley from the mountains along the Persian border. On June 8, 1916, Turkish detachments even succeeded in crossing the border and occupied Kasr-i-Shirin, just across the frontier in Persia. By June 10, 1916, these troops had advanced sixteen miles farther east and fought slight engagements with Russian cavalry near the villages of Serpul and Zehab.

In the north the Turkish advance continued likewise. An important engagement between Turkish troops and a strong Russian cavalry force occurred on June 12, 1916, east of the village of Amachien and terminated in favor of the Turks.

Fighting continued throughout the balance of June, 1916, all along the Turko-Russian front from Trebizond down to the Persian border northeast of Bagdad. At some points the Russians assumed the offensive, but were unable to make any impression on the Turks, who continued to push back the invader and, by quickly fortifying their newly gained positions, succeeded in maintaining them against all counterattacks.

By June 30, 1916, Kermanshah in Persia, about 100 miles across the border, was seriously threatened. On that day Russian forces, which retreated east of Serai, could not maintain their positions near Kerind, owing to vigorous pursuit. Russian rear guards west of Kerind were driven off. Turkish troops passing through Kerind pursued the Russians in the direction of Kermanshah.

On July 5, 1916, Kermanshah was occupied by the Turkish troops after a battle west of the town which lasted all day and night. The first attempt of the Russians to prevent the capture of the city was made at Mahidesst, west of Kermanshah. Here the Russians had hastily constructed fortifications, but the Turks, by a swift encircling move, made their position untenable and forced them to retreat farther east. A strong Russian rear guard defended the village for one day and then followed the main body to a series of previously prepared positions just west of the city. Here a terrific battle lasting all day and all night was waged, and resulted in the retreat of the Russians to Kermanshah. Three detachments of Turks, almost at the heels of the Muscovites, drove them out before they could make another stand.

On July 9, 1916, Turkish reconnoitering forces came in contact with the Russians who were ejected from Kermanshah at a point fifteen miles east of the city, while they were on their way to join their main forces. After a fight of seven hours the Russians were compelled to flee to Sineh.

By this time, however, the Russians had recovered their breath in the Caucasus. On July 12, 1916, they recaptured by assault the town of Mama Khatun. The next day, after a violent night battle, they occupied a series of heights southeast of Mama Khatun. The Turks attempted to take the offensive, but were thrown back. Pressing closely upon them, the Russians took the villages of Djetjeti and Almali.

The Russian offensive quickly assumed great strength. By July 14, 1916, the Russians were only ten miles from Baiburt, had again taken up their drive for Erzingan and had wrested from the Turks some strongly fortified positions southwest of Mush.

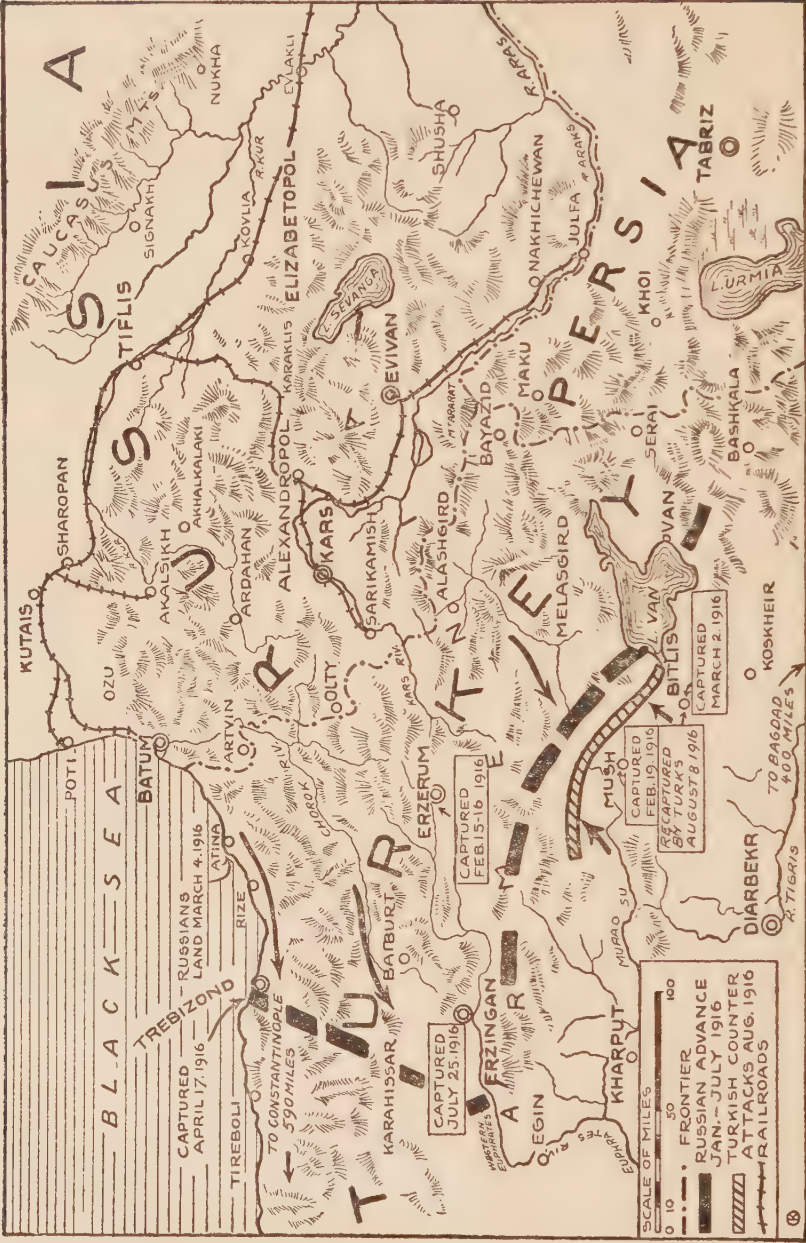
Baiburt fell to the Russians on July 15, 1916. From then on the Russian advance continued steadily, although the Turks maintained a stiff resistance.

On July 18, 1916, the Russians occupied the town of Kugi, an important junction of roads from Erzerum, Lhaputi and Khzindjtina. On July 20, 1916, the Grand Duke's troops captured the town of Gumuskhaneh, forty-five miles southwest of Trebizond.

The next day, July 21, 1916, these forces had advanced to and occupied Ardas, about thirteen miles northwest of Gumuskhaneh. The West Euphrates was crossed the following day. On July 23, 1916, Russian troops on the Erzingan route, in the Ziaret Tapasi district, repulsed two Turkish counterattacks and occupied the heights of Naglika.

East of the Erzingan route they captured a Turkish line on the Durum Darasi River. After having repulsed several Turkish attacks Russian cavalry has reached the line of Boz-Tapa-Mertekli.

Closer and closer the Russians approached to the goal for which they had striven for many months, Erzingan. On July 25,



THE RUSSIANS IN ARMENIA

1916, this strongly fortified Turkish city in Central Armenia, fell into the hands of the Russian Caucasus army under Grand Duke Nicholas.

Erzingan, situated at an altitude of 3,900 feet, about one mile from the right bank of the Euphrates, manufactures silk and cotton and lies in a highly productive plain, which automatically comes into possession of the Russians. Wheat, fruit, wines, and cotton are grown in large quantities, and there are also iron and hot sulphur springs. With its barracks and military factories, the city formed an important army base.

Erzingan has frequently figured in ancient history. It was here that the Sultan of Rum was defeated by the Mongols in 1243, and in the fourth century St. Gregory, "the Illuminator," lived in the city. Erzingan was added to the Osman Empire in 1473 by Mohammed II, after it had been held by Mongols, Tartars, and Turkomans.

With the capture of Erzingan the Russians not only removed the strongest obstacle on the road to Sivas, Angora, and Constantinople, but also virtually completed their occupation of Turkish Armenia.

Throughout the Russian advance, considerable fighting had occurred in the region of Mush, which, however, resulted in no important changes. The main object of the Russian attacks there was to hold as large a Turkish force as possible from any possible attempt to relieve the pressure on Erzingan.

In the south, near the Persian border at Roanduz, and in Persia, near Kermanshah, there were no important developments after the fall of Kermanshah. Considerable fighting, however, went on in both of these sectors without changing in any way the general situation.



## PART VII—CAMPAIGNS IN AFRICA

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### CHAPTER XXXVI

#### THE CONQUEST OF KILIMANJARO

AT the commencement of 1916 the German forces in German East Africa were estimated at some 16,000 men, of whom 2,000 were white, with sixty guns and eighty machine guns. They were organized in companies varying from 150 to 200 strong, with 10 per cent of whites and an average of two machine guns per company.

The enemy occupied a considerable tract of British territory. At Taveta they had established a large intrenched camp, with an advanced position at Salaita (El Oldorobo), an intrenched camp at Serengeti, an outpost at Mbuyuni, the latter places thirteen and seventeen miles respectively east of Taveta. At Kasigau they maintained a garrison of 500-600 rifles with the object of delaying the concentration by blowing up the Uganda railway and the Voi-Maktau railway. Their numerous attempts to accomplish this end were uniformly futile. In the coastal area they maintained a considerable garrison on the Uмба River, and actively patrolled thence to the vicinity of the Uganda railway, Mwele Mdogo, and Gazi. At numerous points throughout the 600 miles of land frontier the opposing troops were in touch, and the result was that General Tighe had to disseminate widely his small force, and was unable to keep any large reserve in hand to meet a sudden call.

In spite of the fact that he had to be constantly on the watch for the next move of his active and enterprising foe, General Tighe, the English commander, kept steadily before him the

necessity of doing all in his power to prepare the way for the eventual offensive movement. With this end in view he organized such of his infantry as could be spared for active operations into the First and Second East African Brigades, acting on the Taveta and Longido lines respectively, and proceeded to develop the organization of the whole force into two divisions and line of communication troops.

On January 15, 1916, the First Division, under Major General Stewart, was ordered to occupy Longido and to develop the lines of communication between that place and Kajiado, on the Magadi railway. On January 22, 1916, the Second Division, under Brigadier General Malleson, advanced from Maktau to Mbuyuni, meeting with slight opposition, and on the 24th occupied Serengeti camp. This advance had the immediate effect of making the enemy evacuate Kasigau. The railway was advanced from Maktau to Njoro drift, three miles east of Salaita, and arrangements made for the concentration of a large force at and near Mbuyuni. The greatest difficulty in the way of this concentration was the lack of water, the Serengeti plains being by nature a waterless desert. A 2½-inch pipe was laid from Bura, but this did not suffice, over 100,000 gallons being required daily, and the pipe yielding only 40,000. The balance had to be made good by railway and storage tanks. The whole of the watering arrangements were so carefully worked out that not a single hitch occurred when the main concentration eventually took place, in spite of the fact that an enemy raiding party succeeded in damaging the Bura headworks.

Early in February the Second South African Infantry Brigade arrived, and on the 12th of that month General Tighe directed the Second Division to make a reconnaissance in force of Salaita, and if possible to occupy that position. General Malleson carried out this operation with three battalions, Second South African Brigade, supported by eighteen guns and howitzers. The Salaita position is one of considerable natural strength, and had been carefully intrenched. The enemy was found to be in force and counterattacked vigorously. General Malleson was compelled to withdraw to Serengeti, but much useful informa-

tion had been gained, and the South African Infantry had learned some invaluable lessons in bush fighting, and also had opportunity to estimate the fighting qualities of their enemy.

At this point a change in the English high command took place. General Tighe was superseded by the famous ex-Boer general, Smuts, who arrived at Mombassa on February 12, 1916, and at general headquarters, in Nairolei, on February 23, 1916. He immediately decided that the occupation of the Kilimanjaro area before the rainy season was a feasible operation.

The original plan devised by General Tighe had been to occupy the Kilimanjaro area by making a converging advance from Longido and Mbuyuni with the First and Second Divisions respectively, with Kahe as the point toward which movement was to be directed. To this main plan General Smuts adhered, but decided that some alteration of dispositions was necessary in order to avoid frontal attacks against intrenched positions of the enemy in the dense bush and to secure the rapidity of advance which appeared to be essential to the success of the operation in the short time before the commencement of the rains, which might be expected toward the end of March.

Accordingly, General Smuts issued orders that the First South African Mounted Brigade under the command of Brigadier General Van Deventer should be transferred from the First Division to Mbuyuni and act from there directly under his orders in a turning movement to the north of Taveta and Salaita. This transfer was carried out by rail most expeditiously, and by March 4, 1916, all minor concentrations were complete, the Third South African Brigade had arrived in the country, and the English forces were disposed as follows:

First Division (less First South African Mounted Brigade), Longido; Second Division (less detachments), Mbuyuni and Serengeti; First South African Mounted Brigade, Mbuyuni; Army Artillery, Mbuyuni and Serengeti; the Second South African Infantry Brigade, one field and one howitzer battery, were retained as Force Reserve.

The task of the First Division was to cross the thirty-five miles of waterless bush which lay between Longido and the Engare

Nanjuki River, occupy the latter, and then advance between Meru and Kilimanjaro to Boma-Ja-Ngombe. The intention was thereafter to direct this division on Kahe, and cut the German line of communication by the Usambara railway.

The task of the First South African Mounted Brigade and of the Second Division was to advance through the gap between Kilimanjaro and the bare hills against the German main force, which was reported to be concentrated in the neighborhood of Taveta, with strong detachments at the head of Lake Jipe, in the bush east of the river Lumi and at Salaita. The total force with which the Germans could oppose this advance into the Kilimanjaro area was estimated at 6,000 rifles, with thirty-seven machine guns and sixteen guns.

From General Smuts's official report we learn the manner in which he proposed to initiate the operation to have been as follows:

(a) First Division to commence its forward movement on March 5, 1916, and be allowed two clear days before the advance against Taveta should begin.

(b) First South African Mounted Brigade and Third South African Infantry Brigade, both under command of General Van Deventer, to leave Mbuyuni and Serengeti on the evening of March 7, 1916, and make a night march to the river Lumi east of Lake Chala. On the 8th to seize the high ground round Lake Chala and develop a turning movement by the west against Taveta. The object of this turning movement was partly to surprise the enemy and partly to avoid a frontal attack through the thick bush which lay between Salaita and Taveta.

(c) Second Division to advance against Salaita Hill on the morning of March 8, intrench a line facing the hill, and make preparations for an attack, supported by the army artillery.

(d) Force Reserve to follow General Van Deventer's column during the night of March 7-8, 1916, and take up a central position astride the Lumi, whence it could be used to reenforce either Van Deventer or the Second Division as required.

It will be readily seen that these movements demanded the greatest energy and decision on the part of the commanders



concerned. In order to be in close touch with the main operations round Taveta General Smuts decided to accompany the Force Reserve to the Lumi, leaving part of his general staff at Mbuyuni to control operations elsewhere.

The initial movements were carried out successfully and with very slight opposition on the part of the Germans, who were undoubtedly taken by surprise. The First Division succeeded in crossing the waterless belt safely, and by the afternoon of March 6, 1916, had its advanced troops established on the small hill Nagasseni just east of the river Engare Nanjuki. By 2 p. m. on the 7th the whole division was concentrated at this point, and on the 8th moved to Geraragua.

On the evening of March 7, 1916, General Van Deventer's column started on its march across the Serengeti plains for Chala. The First South African Mounted Brigade from Mbuyuni and the Third South African Infantry Brigade from Serengeti Camp. The Force Reserve under General Beves followed in the rear of the Third South African Infantry Brigade.

At 6 a. m. on March 8, 1916, the First South African Mounted Brigade reached the Lumi River near the southern end of the Ziواني swamp, and the Third South African Infantry Brigade simultaneously arrived on the river east of Lake Chala. General Van Deventer at once proceeded to make good the high ground lying between Lake Chala and Rombo Mission. He then made a converging movement on the Chala position from the east and northwest, sending the brigade scouts to threaten the German line of retreat to the south. Chala was only lightly held by the Germans, and these dispositions soon caused him to withdraw on Taveta. General Van Deventer occupied Chala and pursued toward Taveta, a portion of which position was occupied by the Second South African Horse. As, however, the Germans in Taveta were in considerable strength, General Van Deventer considered it wise to concentrate on the Chala position before dark.

Meanwhile the Third South African Infantry Brigade and the Force Reserve halted astride the Lumi to guard the crossing. During the afternoon a German force estimated at from

300 to 500, which had been cut off from the main body by the unexpected movement of the English force to Chala, advanced from the north along the line of the river in thick bush, and made more than one attack on the outposts of the infantry in bivouacs. These attacks were easily repulsed with loss to the Germans, but also caused considerable losses to the British forces.

While the bulk of the latter were engaged in making good the Chala position and the Lumi crossing the Second Division, under Major General Tighe, carried out on March 8, 1916, an artillery bombardment of Salaita, and the infantry of the First East African Brigade advanced and dug themselves in in readiness for an attack on the 9th.

At dawn on the 9th General Van Deventer sent his mounted troops to get astride the Moschi road west of Taveta, which place the Germans evacuated in the course of the day. He also sent the Twelfth South African Infantry to make good Ndui Ya Warombo Hill and the Lumi bridge east of Taveta. The Second Division continued to bombard Salaita, and at 2 p. m. the infantry advanced to the attack, only to find that the bombardment, coupled with the turning movement via Chala, had compelled the Germans to evacuate, just in time to avoid two squadrons of the Fourth South African Horse sent to intercept their retreat.

Early on March 10, 1916, a regiment of South African Horse dispatched from Chala to make good Taveta were able to seize the position before a large German body, who had obviously been sent back to reoccupy it. After a brief fight the Germans withdrew toward the Latema-Reata nek, hotly pursued by English mounted troops and field artillery. The Germans fought a stubborn rear-guard action, and eventually were left in position of the nek.

On the same date the Second Division advanced to Taveta, detaching garrisons at Serengeti and Salaita. The Lumi crossing was found impassable for motor lorries and heavy guns, and the bulk of the transport did not cross until the bridge had been improved about midday on the 11th.

On the morning of March 11, 1916, General Van Deventer on the right advanced via Spitz Hill and Kile on Mamba Mission and the line of the Himo. In the center the Fourth South African Horse, supported by the Twelfth South African Infantry, made good East Kitowo Hill after a brisk skirmish. On the left the mounted troops of the Second Division reconnoitered the Latema-Reata nek, which was found to be held in some strength. The Force Reserve was ordered to move from Chala to Taveta.

It was now clear that the Germans had withdrawn from Taveta in two directions, along the Taveta-Moschi road toward the west, and along the Taveta-Kahe road between Reata and Latema Hills toward the southwest, but the exact line of retirement of their main forces was uncertain. The Fourth South African Horse were in touch with what appeared to be merely a rear guard on the Moschi road, and a German force of unknown strength was in position on the Latema-Reata nek. It was essential for General Smuts to determine whether this was only a covering force, or whether the Germans were in such strength as to threaten a counterattack toward Taveta. In either case it was necessary to drive them from the nek before the British could advance beyond Taveta.

The Second Division had in Taveta only three weak battalions of First East African Brigade, eight 12-pr. guns, and a howitzer battery. With these General Smuts determined to clear up the situation and, if possible, make good the nek.

This operation was intrusted to Brigadier General Malleson, commanding the First East African Brigade, who had at his disposal Belfield's Scouts, Mounted Infantry Company, Nos. 6 and 8 Field Batteries, No. 134 Howitzer Battery, 2d Rhodesian Regiment, 130th Baluchis, Third King's African Rifles, Machine Gun Battery, Loyal North Lances, and Volunteer Machine Gun Company.

General Malleson selected as his objective the spur of Latema, which commands the nek from the north, and at 11.45 a. m. advanced to the attack. The 130th Baluchis on the right and Third D. A. R. on the left formed the firing line, Second Rhode-

sian Regiment the general reserve. The mounted troops watched both flanks, and the artillery supported the attack at a range of about 3,500 yards.

As they approached the bush-clad slopes of Latema the firing line came under a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire. The Germans also had at least two guns and several pompoms in action, and the British infantry could make little headway.

At 4 p. m. the Force Reserve began to arrive in Taveta, and reenforced the Second Division with the South African Battalion. At the same time General Malleson, who was seriously indisposed, asked to be relieved of his command, and General Tighe was directed to assume command of the operations personally.

On the arrival of the Fifth South African Infantry, General Tighe ordered the Rhodesians to advance, and to carry the King's African Rifles forward with them in an assault on the Latema Ridge, the 130th Baluchis cooperating vigorously on the right. All ground gained was to be at once made good. The Ninth Field Battery and the South African Field Battery, as they arrived in Taveta, were brought into action in support of the attack. The assault was gallantly pressed home, especially by the Rhodesians, but failed to make good the ridge. General Tighe found it necessary to support the Baluchis with half the Fifth South African Infantry, and the Second Division was further reenforced with the Seventh South African Infantry.

This latter battalion reached General Tighe about 8 p. m., and shortly afterward he decided that the best chance of quickly dislodging the Germans from their position on the nek was to send in the two South African Battalions with the bayonet by night. This operation was no doubt fraught with considerable risk, as there was no opportunity of adequately reconnoitering the ground over which the attack must be made, nor was it by any means certain that the enemy was not present in large numbers. On the other hand, the moon was in the first quarter, and so facilitated movement up to midnight; the bush along the line of the road to the nek did not appear to be very dense; and, moreover, the volume of fire developed by the Germans did not seem to indicate that they had a large force actually in their



first line, though they had, as usual, a large proportion of machine guns in action.

The night advance of the two South African Battalions was ably organized and led by Lieutenant Colonel Byron, commanding the Fifth South African Infantry. The Seventh South African Infantry formed the first line, with the Fifth in support. They advanced with great dash through the bush, which proved to be much thicker than was anticipated, driving the Germans before them till the latter was on the crest, where they checked the British advance. A certain amount of disintegration was inevitable in a night advance through the dense thorn bush in the face of stubborn opposition. Groups of men and individuals who got separated from their leaders had no course but to fall back to the position where the First East African Brigade was formed up in general reserve, about 1,500 yards east of the nek.

Colonel Byron had issued instructions that, on reaching the crest, Lieutenant Colonel Freeth, commanding the Seventh South African Infantry, and Major Thompson, of the same battalion, should wheel outwards and make good the heights north and south of the nek respectively, while Colonel Byron himself secured the actual nek. Colonel Freeth fought his way up the steep spurs of Latema till he found that the party with him had dwindled to eighteen men. He was joined by a few of the Rhodesians and King's African Rifles, who had clung onto the crest of the ridge after the assault in the evening, and the small party held on till daylight. Major Thompson wheeled toward Reata with 179 men and dug himself in an advantageous position. About midnight Colonel Byron reached the nek within thirty yards of the enemy's main position. The opposition here was very stubborn. At one point one officer and twenty-two men were killed by the concentrated fire of three machine guns, and Colonel Byron, who was himself slightly wounded, reached the nek with only twenty men. The Germans were still in a position which commanded the ground he had won, and, finding it impossible either to advance or to hold his ground, he was compelled to withdraw.

Meanwhile General Tighe found it extremely difficult to keep in touch with the progress of the fight, of which he could only judge by the firing and the reports of officers and others sent back from the ridge, who naturally were only cognizant of events in their own immediate vicinity. About 1 a. m. several requests for reinforcements reached him, and he ordered forward the 130th Baluchis.

These advanced at 1.20 a. m. and shortly afterward met Colonel Byron, who reported that he had ordered his small party to retire. General Tighe accordingly re-formed his force and dug in astride the road to await daylight. Attempts to get in touch with Colonel Freeth and Major Thompson failed.

From General Tighe's reports, General Smuts decided that it was inadvisable to press the direct attack on the Latema-Reata nek further, and awaited the effect of the turning movement of the mounted troops, which was ordered for the next morning, and calculated to cause a speedy withdrawal of the enemy from this position. Accordingly, at 4.30 a. m. General Tighe was directed to withdraw his whole force before day-break to a line farther back from the nek. This withdrawal was in progress when parols sent to gain touch with the flank detachments on Reata and Latema found the latter in occupation of both hills and the Germans in full retreat from the nek. General Smuts at once dispatched the Eighth and some artillery to shell the retiring Germans who were then estimated to be between 1,500 and 2,000 in number. Effective pursuit through the dense tropical forest which stretched from Kitowo to Kahe was out of the question.

The British casualties in the engagement were about 270. They captured, besides rifles and ammunition, a 6-centimeter gun and three machine guns. Some forty to fifty German dead were found on the position, and, as they are always most careful to remove their dead and wounded, there can be no doubt that their casualties were severe. While this action was in progress on the Taveta-Kahe road, the Fourth South African Horse and the Twelfth South African Infantry kept up a brisk engagement with the Germans on the Taveta-Moschi road, where the enemy

was found to be in strong force on the northern slope of Latema and on North Kitowo Hill.

With the end of this action the first phase of the battle for Kilimanjaro came to a conclusion. On March 12, 1916, General Van Deventer continued his advance up to Mambe Mission and the Himo Bridge, on the Taveta-Moschi road, in the face of slight opposition. The Germans in retirement during the night and the early morning had destroyed all bridges on the road, and great difficulty was experienced in rationing Van Deventer's force. On the 13th he advanced and occupied Moschi unopposed, the Germans having withdrawn the previous night toward Kahe. The Second and Third South African Brigades were thereupon concentrated at the Himo Bridge, the remainder of the Second Division at Taveta.

It is necessary now to refer to the movements of the First Division, which had arrived at Geraragua on March 8, 1916, having encountered only slight opposition. On March 9, 1916, General Stewart halted to reconnoiter and let his supplies catch up. The direct road from Geraragua to Boma-Ja-Ngombe was reported unpassable for wheels, all bridges having been destroyed by the Germans. As a result of this and of the exhausted state of his ox transport, General Stewart considered it necessary to halt on the morning of March 10, 1916, and reconnoiter for a road farther to the west. A difficult but passable track was found and the march was resumed at midday. The mounted troops left Geraragua on March 10, 1916, on which date they encountered some opposition, sustaining thirteen casualties. The division and the mounted troops eventually joined hands on the Sanja River on the night of March 12-13, 1916, and on the 13th advanced to Boma-Ja-Ngombe. On March 14, 1916, when the main force of the Germans had already retired to the Ruwu and Kahe positions, the First Division joined hands with General Van Deventer in New Moschi, through which place the six German companies which had been opposing General Stewart had already passed on the night of March 12, 1916.

The next few days, from March 13 to 18, 1916, were spent in improving the road from Taveta to Moschi, reorganizing

transport, bringing up supplies, etc., and in reconnoitering toward Kahe and the Ruwu River. The whole of the country bordering that river on the north is dense tropical forest, and the Germans took advantage of this by firing into the British camps by night.

On the night of March 17-18, 1916, Belfield's Scouts were sent from Himo, and at dawn were driven off by a superior German force. A position on the Ruwu River appeared to General Smuts from patrols, intelligence reports and somewhat incomplete air reconnoissance to be the next which the Germans might hold and it was of vital importance for purposes of railway extension and future advance that the Germans should be driven south of this river before the rains commenced.

He therefore, on March 18, 1916, issued orders for a general advance toward the Ruwu. On the extreme right the East African Mounted Rifles and a squadron of the Seventeenth Cavalry advanced from Mue via Masai Kraal. The Third South African Brigade moved from Himo Bridge on Euphorbien Hill, and the Second South African Brigade from the same point on Unterer Himo, to which place the First East African Brigade of the Second Division sent forward two battalions from Latema. The advance was supported by field and mountain artillery. The infantry occupied the line Euphorbien Hill-Unterer Himo without difficulty, while the East African Mounted Rifles encountered three German companies at Masai Kraal. During the day the Second East African Brigade of the First Division was ordered from New Moschi to Mue to support the mounted troops on the Kahe road.

On March 19, 1916, the general advance continued, but the First East African, Second and Third South African Brigades could make little progress through the well-nigh impenetrable bush which surrounded the German position on the Himo about Rasthaus. The Third Brigade, supported by the Twenty-eighth Mountain Battery, had a sharp engagement with the Germans at dusk while occupying its line for the night, and sustained from thirty to forty casualties. The fresh graves of twenty-seven of the German Askaris were afterward found in the vicin-



ity of the action. The Second East African Brigade and the mounted troop of the First Division under General Sheppard pushed the Germans back to Store, four miles south of Masai Kraal, and bivouacked there for the night. On March 20, 1916, General Smuts withdrew the Second South African Brigade from Unterer Himo, and sent three battalions to reenforce General Sheppard on the Mue-Kahe road, where he anticipated the strongest opposition. At 2 p. m. on March 20, 1916, General Van Deventer, with the First South African Mounted Brigade, the Fourth South African Horse, and two field batteries, left Moschi with instructions to cross the Pangani, and get in rear of the German position at Kahe station. That night General Sheppard's camp at Store was heavily attacked from 9.30 p. m. to midnight. These attacks were repulsed. The German force actually engaged was estimated by prisoners at 500 men, with another 500 in reserve. Their casualties were estimated at seventy to one hundred, those of the British force were twenty.

At daylight on March 21, 1916, Van Deventer was approaching the Pangani from the west at a point southwest of Kahe Hill. He experienced some difficulty in crossing the river, but by mid-day had occupied in succession Kahe Hill, Bauman Hill, and Kahe Station with slight opposition. The Germans had already earlier in the day blown up the main railway bridge over the Ruwu (or Pangani).

After the loss of Kahe Hill the Germans, realizing its importance as the key to the Ruwu position, made several determined attempts to recover it, which were, however, beaten back with loss. A mounted party which moved forward from Kahe Hill to cut off the German retreat by the wagon road south of the Ruwu found the Germans in force and had to retire. Van Deventer therefore waited for the following day to develop the turning movement, after his whole brigade should have been brought across the Pangani. During the whole day the Germans had two 4.1-inch naval guns in action, one on a railway truck and the other from a concealed fixed position south of the Ruwu.

On March 21, 1916, General Sheppard had the following troops under his command:

*Second East African Brigade*—Twenty-fifth Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, Twenty-ninth Punjabis, 129th Baluchis. *Second South African Brigade*—Fifth South African Battalion, Sixth South African Battalion, Eighth South African Battalion. *Divisional Troops*—East African Mounted Rifles, one Squadron Seventeenth Cavalry, First and Third South African Field Artillery Batteries, Twenty-seventh Mountain Battery, First King's African Rifles, two Royal Naval Armored Cars.

As soon as General Smuts heard that General Van Deventer was nearing Kahe he ordered General Sheppard to advance. This the latter did at 11.30 a. m., with the Second South African Brigade on his right and the Second East African Brigade on his left, the dividing line being the Masai Kraal-Kahe road. By 12.30 p. m. the Germans had been driven back on to their main position on the south edge of a clearing in the dense bush, with their east and west flanks protected respectively by the Soko Nassai and the Defu rivers, both of which were considerable obstacles to the movements of infantry. General Sheppard's intention was to attack the Germans frontally, and, with or without the aid of the Third South African Brigade, to envelop their right eastern flank.

However, the advance of the Third Brigade from Euphorbien Hill was so impeded by the dense bush that it was unable to exercise any influence on the fight, and without its aid the task proved to be beyond the powers of the force at General Sheppard's disposal. His infantry tried to cross the clearing, which varied in width from 600 to 1,200 yards, but the German dispositions had been so skillfully made that these attempts were met and repulsed by rifle and machine-gun fire, both from front and flank. Two double companies of the 129th Baluchis crossed the Soko Nassai, and endeavored to turn up the German right, but here, too, they were held up.

General Sheppard did not know that Van Deventer was already at Kahe Station, some miles in advance of his right flank, and no contact could be established through the intervening thick bush. He accordingly gave orders to dig in on the ground won, with a view to renewing the attack on March 22, 1916.

At dawn on the 22d patrols found the Germans gone. They had waited only for the cover of night to retire across the Ruwu River and proceed down the main road toward Lembeni, abandoning their stationary 4.1-inch gun, which had been blown up.

The British casualties at the Soko Nassai action were 288. As far as was known the German forces employed on March 22, 1916, were fourteen or fifteen companies, distributed along the Himo and Ruwu from Rasthaus to Kahe. Besides the two 4.1-inch naval guns they employed several field guns and pom-poms.

The result of these operations from March 18 to 21, 1916, was to drive the Germans out of the country north of and along the Ruwu River. Aruscha had meanwhile been occupied by British mounted scouts, who drove off a German company in a southerly direction, and thus the conquest of the Kilimanjaro-Meru area, probably the richest and most desirable district of German East Africa, was satisfactorily complete. General Smuts now established his headquarters at Moschi, placed a chain of outposts along the line of the Ruwu, and set to work to reorganize his force for the next move, meanwhile concentrating the troops as far as possible in healthy localities to give the men a rest after the hardships they had endured.

Concerning the taking of Moschi, the following details were supplied by a special correspondent with General Smuts's forces:

"On March 9, 1916, the mechanical transport started on its way from Kajiado, a base camp, about forty-five miles south of Nairobi on a branch line from Magadi Junction a little east of Nairobi. The cars all traveled by road through a Masai district full of big game. At Namanga the general staff, who had left Kajiado three days before, were overtaken, and all left for Longido West, where an advanced base had been established. There were several regiments there, including some Indian troops. The advanced guard was composed of infantry, cavalry, and a mountain battery, whose boast it is that it can bring a gun into action within forty-five seconds and find range within three shots. The men are recruited from a particular district in India, and entrance to it is an hereditary privilege.

"The general and staff came after the advanced guard and were followed by the main convoy, various other regiments, and the South African Field Artillery. Another convoy, principally of food (sufficient to take the column to Moschi) and ammunition, and the motor-car section of the ammunition column, the duty of which was to keep the guns provided. The rear guard included Cape Colonial troops.

"At Sheep's Head, nine miles from Longo West, the British cavalry got into touch with the German outposts charging a hill and routing the Askaris upon it. The next day the column proceeded again, a large convoy of commissariat and stores following the Field Artillery.

"In the afternoon, after Geraragua had been reached by the artillery, the Germans made a surprise attack on the main convoy. The artillery at once turned about, marching parallel with the advancing column on the side from which danger threatened. The convoys were ordered to take up positions 3,000 yards at least to the right of the advance. A heavy artillery fire ensued. The guns found range quickly, but the difficulty was that the opposing troops, estimated to be about 600 Askaris, were scattered in threes and fours among the kopjes. Firing was heavy on both sides; but while the British had rifles, Maxims, and mountain guns, the Germans had only Mausers and Maxims.

"The Germans tried to create confusion by sounding British army calls, chiefly 'Cease firing' and the 'Retire,' but the British officers kept their men together by ordering the 'Fire' to be blown on the bugles. The firing waned, and it was then realized that a return along the road the column had come was necessary. The motor cars turned on to the veldt. A party of Askaris, mounted, reported that some German troops were advancing with fixed bayonets. Eleven cars got to safety, but three were left behind, two being hidden in some long grass. The drivers of the cached motors jumped into other trollies and got away. When it was dark the order was given to halt and maintain strict silence, both smoking and even whispering being forbidden. Scouting parties of German Askaris were seen to



pass as ghosts in the night. Two of the three cars were recovered, but the cost was three men killed, a Maxim gun opening fire on a small body of cavalry which went up to secure the third. The Germans had not discovered the other two. The cars then went back to Sheep's Head Hill. The next day, after the convoy had been reenforced by further Cape boys, they advanced toward Geraragua, which was found to be evacuated.

"The advance into Moschi was preceded by a bombardment for some four or five hours. The Germans evacuated the town and when the British were fairly established they opened with their artillery from the neighboring hills between two and three in the morning. A heavy fight ensued, during which the British losses were considerable, but so were those of the Germans. At the end the possession of Moschi was made secure. British burial parties picked up over 380 German bodies, and many prisoners were taken.

"Driven from their strongholds, the Germans split up into small bands, which scattered over the countryside. Many of these were later captured."

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## CHAPTER XXXVII

### CONTINUATION OF THE CONQUEST OF EAST AFRICA

AFTER the conquest of the Kilimanjaro region operations in German East Africa were checked considerably by the beginning of the rainy season. The British forces, however, continued, step by step, their gradual conquest of the German colony, aided therein by Belgian and Portuguese forces which operated from the Belgian Congo in the west and from Portuguese East Africa in the south.

As the result of a movement commenced during the afternoon of April 3, 1916, a portion of dismounted troops under General Van Deventer successfully surprised a German force, which

with machine guns was stationed at Old Lolkissale, a mountain stronghold in the Arusha district, thirty miles southwest of Arusha town.

This force was surrounded in the course of April 4, 1916, and surrendered on the morning of April 6, 1916. The German force was a considerable one. The German casualties were numerous, and seventeen Europeans and 404 native soldiers surrendered, with machine guns and large quantities of ammunition.

General Van Deventer's detachment promptly extended this success by occupying Umgugwe and Kothersheim on April 12, 1916, and Scalanga on April 14, 1916. The garrisons were either captured or driven off with heavy losses. All of these places are about 100 miles southwest of Arusha.

On April 17, 1916, the Germans concentrated some forces at Kondoa-Irangi, about seventy-five miles south of Kissale and 210 miles from the coast between the Usambara railway from Tanga to Muhesa and the Central Railway from Dar-es-Salaam to Ujiji.

On April 19, 1916, an engagement took place in this region which resulted a few days later in the retirement of the German forces in the direction of the Central Railway from which Kondoa-Irangi is about 100 miles distant. The same day British mounted troops occupied the place itself and captured in its vicinity various convoys and quantities of munitions. The Germans, however, still held a strong position in the hills to the southeast of Kondoa-Irangi.

The Germans received reenforcements and concentrated their forces about Kilimatinde on the Central Railroad, about ninety miles southwest of Kondoa-Irangi. They then advanced again in the direction of the latter place and an attack against it, preceded by a heavy bombardment, was attempted during the night of May 9-10, 1916, but was driven off with severe losses.

The Germans persisted in their offensive during the 10th and 11th, and after sunset on the latter day made a determined effort against the British left flank, which was repulsed.

By May 25, 1916, various detachments of General Smuts's forces had occupied without opposition the following localities:

Rufu Lager (on the Pangani River, twenty-six miles south of Kahe railway station on the Usambara Railway); Lembeni (on the same railway, twenty miles south of Kahe); Ngulu (in the Ngulu Pass, between the Northern and Central Pare Mountain groups, eight miles southeast of Lembeni); and the railway station at Same (Usambara Railway).

By the same date troops under Brigadier General Northey, commanding the British forces on the northern borders of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, had advanced to a distance of twenty miles into German territory on the whole front between Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika. The Germans were thereby compelled to retire from Ipiana (twenty-one miles north of Karonga) and Igamba (eighteen miles northeast of Fort Hill), toward Neu-Langenberg. Karonga is on the northwest shores of Lake Nyasa, and is one of the chief stations in the northern part of the Nyasaland Protectorate. Ipiana is also a port on Lake Nyasa and is a few miles north of the Songwe River, which stream forms the frontier between German and British territory. From both Karonga and Ipiana roads lead across a high and much broken plateau to the southern end of Lake Tanganyika, roughly a distance of 200 miles. Fort Hill is a Government station in Nyasaland on the road to Tanganyika; Neu-Langenberg is a military post on the German road between the lakes.

In the meantime another British column had moved down to Pangani River via Marago Opuni, about eighteen miles west by north from Same, to Le Sara. On May 22, 1916, these forces arrived in front of the position which was held by the Germans at Mikocheni.

The German line was astride the railway on a narrow neck between the South Pare Mountains and the Pangani and was strongly intrenched. After a reconnaissance on May 29, 1916, the principal trenches were assaulted and carried early on May 30, 1916, with slight loss, as they were insufficiently held. Reconnaissance on the morning of 31st established the fact that the Germans had retired to Mkomazi station during the night, blowing up Mkomazi bridge and leaving a train in our hands. The British column continued its advance and reached Buiko station.

On the left, another British column, which had marched through the Gonya gap from Same, reached the Shegulu bridge on the morning of May 31, 1916, and pushed on to the Mkomazi River in the afternoon.

The Pangani River was then bridged at Mikocheni and the British forces advanced again. Advancing along the railway, Brigadier General Hannington's column reached Mazinde on June 8, 1916, and on the following day occupied the important station of Mombo, dislodging a German force, which retired south.

Having crossed to the right bank of the Pangani at Mikocheni, Major General Hoskins's column advanced on Mkalamo, where the light railway connecting Mombo with Handeni crosses the river fourteen miles southwest of Mombo. A considerable German force was encountered and driven south, and Mkalamo was occupied early on June 10, 1916.

Makuiuni, eight miles from Mombo, was occupied on June 12, 1916, and Wilhelmstal on the thirteenth.

After encountering considerable difficulties, owing to lack of water and the density of the bush, portions of Major General Hoskins's column, under Brigadier General Sheppard, reached Kwedizwa (six miles north of Handeni) on the night of June 15, 1916, the advanced troops pushing on the village of Kilimanjaro, close to Handeni, the following morning.

Simultaneously with the above movement, Brigadier General Hannington's column, advancing along the railway, occupied the important station of Korogwe, and secured the wagon bridge over the Pangani River.

On Lake Victoria other forces occupied the island of Ukerewe, north of the German port of Mwanza, capturing two Krupp guns and a quantity of stores.

In the meantime progress had also been made by the British troops in the vicinity of the Rhodesia-Nyasaland border. British columns had pursued the Germans, who retired in the direction of Iranga, as far as the vicinity of Neutengule, capturing prisoners, ammunition, stores and supplies.

Another force invested Namema, the garrison of which made



its escape during the night of June 2, 1916, not, however, without heavy losses. On June 6, 1916, a British column attacked the Germans in the Poroto Mountains and captured a field gun, rifles, and ammunition. Another column occupied Bismarckburg on June 8, 1916, and Alt-Langen on June 13, 1916.

Columns of Major General Hoskins's First Division occupied Handeni on the afternoon of June 19, 1916, the Germans continuing their retreat toward the Central Railway, after incurring some losses in a rear-guard action.

On June 24, 1916, the Germans met still another defeat on the Lukigura River, forty miles south of Handeni. The Lukigura is a northern tributary of the Wami, a river which reaches the sea at Saadani opposite Zanzibar. The Lukigura-Wami confluence is about sixty miles from the coast and some forty miles north of Morgoro, on the railway to Tanganyika, and one of the oldest settlements in German East Africa. West of the Lukigura are high hills, part of the escarpment of the plateau which extends east to the great lakes.

The Germans there occupied a strong position in dense bush on the western side of the river. They were frontally attacked in the morning, while another column arriving after a night march fell on their left flank and rear. The British captured a pom-pom, two machine guns, a quantity of rifles and munitions of all sorts, and numerous prisoners, including eleven Germans.

Concerning this engagement Reuter's special correspondent with General Smuts's forces gives the following interesting details: "On June 23, 1916, secret orders were issued for a night march. There was to be no wheeled transport, as the way would lead through bush, and guns were to go on muleback. As dusk was falling long lines of men on foot, moving in Indian file, vanished from camp into the dim recesses of the forest. The orders were Silence and No Smoking. The purpose of the march was to cooperate in an enveloping movement. The column was under the personal command of General Hoskins.

"Another column, under the South African General Beves, sighted the enemy's rear guard on the following day, June 24, 1916, at Mlembuni on the Lukigura River.

"At three o'clock in the morning, General Sheppard's Punjabis and the Rhodesians swung down the main road, making for the bridge, and at sunrise Sir John Willoughby's armored motor dashed to the front and engaged a pompom at close quarters. A splinter went through the radiator of the car, and it had to retire, but repairs were made and the car was soon again to the fore.

"The central force was meanwhile containing the enemy at the bridgehead, pending developments. These came at noon when General Hoskins, appearing after twenty hours' arduous marching, engaged the enemy who was intrenched on the hill, taking him in the flank. This position was carried, the honors of the day resting with the Fusiliers and the Kashmir Regiment, who captured pompoms and Maxims.

"The enemy now attempted to escape across the road, but General Sheppard flung the Germans back, doing severe execution, and the bridge was occupied. Our casualties were slight. Three Germans were killed and thirteen were made prisoners.

"The Germans managed, though with difficulty, to extricate their naval gun, with which they shelled us erratically, sullenly, and at random through the darkness."

On June 25, 1916, the Germans were again driven back from Kondoa-Irangi. On June 30, 1916, Ubena, east of the Livingstone Mountains on the northeast shore of Lake Nyasa, was occupied.

On July 7, 1916, after slight resistance, Tanga was occupied. This town is seventy-seven miles south of Mombassa, possesses a safe and commodious harbor, and is the sea terminus of the railway from Usambara, and a rival to Dar-es-Salaam for premier place among the ports of German East Africa.

Later that month Muheza and Amani, between Wilhelmstal and Ianga were occupied, which gave the British possession of the whole Usambara railroad.

At the same time that the British forces extended their conquest of German East Africa, Belgian and, to a lesser extent, Portuguese forces were active at the west and south frontier, respectively, of this colony.

About the middle of April, 1916, General Tombeur, commanding the Belgian forces operating on the eastern frontier of the Congo, announced that his troops, turning the German positions which defended the passage of the Ruzizi River, effected a landing on the German shore of Lake Kivu. This maneuver, supported by the action of the Belgian gunboats, forced the Germans to evacuate their positions on the upper Ruzizi.

To the south of the lake other columns crossed the river and on April 19, 1916, occupied the German positions at Shangugu. To the north of Lake Kivu the Belgian troops also penetrated into German territory.

Following on the occupation of the positions at Shangugu the Belgian troops continued to progress along the southern shore of Lake Kivu. On April 21, 1916, they attacked the German rear guard and forced it to retreat. On April 20, 1916, the Belgian troops occupied the German post of Dischangi, which had been abandoned by the Germans.

A few days later, on April 30, 1916, a Belgian column which crossed into German East Africa near Ruhanga made its way to the eastern shore of Lake Mohasi, about midway between Lake Kivu and Lake Victoria. The opposing German force retreated toward Lake Victoria Nyanza, about seventy miles east. This meant that now two Belgian columns, one advancing from the north, the other from the west, were penetrating German East Africa.

On May 8, 1916, a Belgian brigade under the command of Colonel Molitor entered Kigali, the principal town in the province of Ruanda, on Lake Kivu. The Belgian troops also reoccupied the island of Kwidjwi, an island about fifteen miles long by about six miles broad, lying in the southern half of Lake Kivu and somewhat toward its western shore, which had been captured by the Germans by a surprise attack at the commencement of hostilities.

The occupation of Kigali seriously threatened the German lines of communication, and their forces had to fall back. They were strongly pressed by the Belgians, who were enabled, by the German withdrawal, to occupy on May 12, 1916, the Mount Kama

range which the Germans had converted into a powerful defensive barrier.

The day before, May 11, 1916, Nyanza had been occupied by the Belgians. By the end of May the Belgian left was resting on the river Kagera. In the center a column had crossed the river Akanjaru, to the east of Iruvura, where a concentration of the German forces had been reported. The right column was approaching the town of Usambara. In Ruanda the Belgians organized a provisional government and were apparently well received by the natives. Ruanda is the northwest district of German East Africa, and the native chiefs continue to exercise considerable authority and had only in the last few years acknowledged German suzerainty. As late as 1913 the Germans were engaged against a recalcitrant native chieftainess. The Belgians had now advanced over 100 miles into German territory.

Early in June, 1916, the German forces, after retreating toward the south, concentrated in the region of Kitega. The army of General Tombeur, continuing the pursuit of the enemy, reached three points in the high road between Victoria Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika.

The right column, after occupying Usambara on June 8, 1916, continued its march towards Kitega.

The two center columns reached respectively Lusaraki and Kasima, the latter being about 124 miles east of Usambara.

The left column reached the river Kagera, and held the route from that place to Lake Tanganyika.

By June 6, 1916, the two center columns united and attacked at Kiwitawe (northeast of Lake Tanganyika), a strong German rear guard supplied with machine guns and artillery. The Germans were forced to retreat.

The Belgians promptly took up the pursuit, and their advance guard again caught up with the Germans on June 12, 1916, and forced an engagement with them on the road from Wiwitawe to Kitega, east of the Ngokoma River. The Germans were routed and retreated.

By midsummer, 1916, the Germans in East Africa were being pressed from three sides and thereby gradually forced back to



the central region of German East Africa, where they still held control of the railway to Tanganyika. Both the Belgians under General Tombeur, and the British under General Northey, were, however, as yet too far distant to affect the movements of General Smuts and the German forces opposed to him north of the Central Railway.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### SUEZ - EGYPT

ABOUT the middle of April, 1916, activities were resumed in the territory adjoining the Suez Canal in the east. There, for more than a year, Turkish forces had occupied considerable Egyptian territory. On April 13, 1916, a successful reconnaissance was made by a column of Australian troops at Jifjaffa. The column moved out on the night of April 12-13, 1916, and reached Hill 1,082, three miles west by south of Jifjaffa, by 5.30 a. m. The Turkish camp was attacked at 7 a. m. and was occupied after a brisk fight. Other troops farther to the north occupied the oasis of Katra near the coast.

How much the war had changed the general aspect of the country near the Suez Canal is described in a dispatch from the special correspondent of the London "Times," who says, in part:

"A vast system of road and railway communication, as well as of animal transport, is in being, and deep across the eastern side of the canal, where voyagers were accustomed to look over miles of sand trembling under the blistering rays of the sun, with scarce a palm tree to relieve a picture of utter desolation, one sees the civilizing influence of military hands. A few months have indeed wrought a wondrous change. Having seen what is going forward, I believe, if there is a battle for the canal, it will not be fought within sight of the banks."

On April 23, 1916, considerable fighting developed in the Katia district. About 500 Turkish troops attacked a strong British

position at Duweidar, about fifteen miles from the canal. How this attack was beaten back by the British is vividly narrated by an eyewitness in the following account:

"The first heavy mist for six weeks obscured everything more than forty yards away from the line the Scots were holding, which was an inner perimeter with no posts more than 200 yards from the fringe of the oasis. At 5.17 a. m., there was heavy firing and a tremendous burst of Arab cheering in front of the redoubt on the crest to the southeast of the oasis. To the attack there was an instant reply. Veterans who had done their duty before stopped the rush with a rapid burst of fire, and every Turk seen to approach the wire entanglements paid the penalty.

"At the sound of the first shot every tent in the oasis was lowered, and men in reserve went out to reenforce the eastern and southern posts, but after the first few minutes it was not possible to give aid to the southeastern post, because the approach to it was under machine-gun fire. Every officer and man who attempted to get to that hot corner was hit. The main attack was made against this post.

"There was a machine gun in this post. It was hit in five places, and the three men of the gun team were killed and one wounded, but the other men fought the gun to the end, and most of the Turkish dead were found in front of them, the nearest body being twenty-two yards away.

"To the left of the southeastern post a small party was holding an intrenched position on rising ground above one end of the oasis. Not far in front of them a machine gun was in action, and its position was so frequently changed that it could not be located.

"It now became necessary to strengthen this position, and Captain Roberts sent Captain Bruce, Army Service Corps (Territorials) with a few men to lengthen the line. Captain Bruce, who was supply officer at Duweidar, on the first shot being fired, offered to do anything in defense of the post, and, apart from the gallant deed which resulted in his death, he will be remembered for the sterling example he set.

"At nine o'clock the first of the reenforcements were sent to assist at the spot Captain Bruce had been holding so strongly, but in crossing an open space Lieutenant Crawford fell wounded, and lay exposed to a murderous fire, the nature of which Captain Bruce had experienced for at least three hours. This did not deter him from setting out on an errand of mercy, and he left the sandbag which had been his sole protection and ran to carry in his comrade. He fell mortally wounded, and died in a few minutes. His noble example was followed, and fortunately with success, by Corporal Clifford. The corporal carried to safety Lieutenant Crawford and brought in Captain Bruce's body, though the fire did not slacken and the hazards were known to him.

"The collection of seventy dead within fifty yards of the defenses tells the stirring tale of the early hours better than anything else, and the victory was the greater because no foe could have shown more daring or determination to capture the oasis."

Katia, occupied by the British only a week before, was also attacked, but by a much stronger force, numbering some 3,000 and having three field guns. After a severe engagement the British forces found it necessary to withdraw.

The next day, April 24, 1916, eight British aeroplanes surprised the Turks in their newly gained position at Katia and destroyed their camp completely with bombs. Aeroplane attacks were also made on April 25, 1916, on two Turkish positions at Bir el Abd and Bir el Bayud, both slightly south of Katia. Turkish aeroplanes attacked El Kantara and Port Said. Beyond continued aeroplane activity little of importance happened in the vicinity of the Suez Canal during the balance of April, 1916, and throughout May, June, and July, 1916. Both Turkish and British aeroplanes, however, were continuously very active. Port Said was raided a number of times, while British machines inflicted more or less damage to a number of Turkish camps east of the canal.

In the western Sudan a serious situation for the British troops was created about the middle of May, 1916, by the out-

break of a revolution on the part of the Sultan of Darfur, Ali Dinar.

Under the present Sultan, Darfur, the westernmost state of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, has enjoyed a more peaceful existence than in the generation which preceded him. This period included the predominance of the dervishes, following the incorporation of the state in the dominions of the Mahdi in 1883. The country then ceased to be under Egyptian rule, but its people, who are negroes and Arabs, found their lot intolerable under their new masters, and a state of constant warfare resulted until the overthrow of the Khalifa at Omdurman in 1898. The following year the Sudan Government recognized Ali Dinar as sultan on his payment of an annual tribute of £500.

The capital, El Fasher, which is 500 miles from Khartum, is a town of 10,000 inhabitants. It has a few fine buildings, with a governor's house, but the town consists for the most part of mean and unimpressive dwellings. Gordon had a fort built there in 1878, and three years later made Slatin Pasha governor of the province, which he continued to administer until he surrendered to the Mahdi in 1883. The greater part of the country is a high plateau, varied by mountains reaching to a height of 6,000 or 7,000 feet, and in consequence the place is one of great strength.

However, during recent months, Ali Dinar's attitude toward the government of the Sudan had been less satisfactory.

Early in February, 1916, he commenced concentrating a force on the Kordofan frontier at Jebel-el-Hella. A mixed force of all arms under Colonel Kelly assembled at Nahud (300 miles southwest of Khartum), and at the end of March occupied Um Shanga and Jebel-el-Hella (about 100 miles west of Nahud), and subsequently moved forward to Abiad (sixty miles farther on), where preparations were made for the advance on El Fasher, Ali Dinar's capital (ninety miles west of Abiad).

On May 15, 1916, the advance began. The main action took place near the village of Beringia, twelve miles north of the capital, where the sultan's troops numbering between two and three thousand, held a strongly intrenched position on the morn-



ing of May 22, 1916. The Camel Corps successfully induced them to leave this position. They then attacked the British troops with utmost rapidity and desperation. This attack was met with withering fire, but some few penetrated to within ten yards of the British lines. British troops then counterattacked, totally defeating the sultan, whose minimum forces are estimated at one thousand.

Sultan Ali Dinar fled with a small following early on May 23, 1916, on which day the British forces occupied his capital, El Fasher.



















